TRINITY CONTINUUM

AEGIS

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To Leath Sheales, whose enthusiasm and support for the Trinity Continuum helped shape the game as it is today. He will be greatly missed.

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STAR FALL

The sea lapped against the ship's hull. The vessel swayed languidly as the salted air whipped through Amya's auburn hair. She narrowed her eyes against the sea-spit, half staring beyond the water, half into the noonday sun.

"We'll make land in two days," she said to the Athenian.

He tugged at his robes, adjusting them around his midriff. She glanced at him, remembering his age. The man was ten years her senior, the vessel's owner, and, more importantly, the means by which she could express her needs to the ship's Greek crew.

Tucking his fabrics once more into his belt, he asked, "Are you certain?"

She nodded. These eight weeks had been arduous, the journey long and leaving much of the crew with little more than salted meat and growing tensions to distract them from the laborious task of maneuvering the ship through the seas. As days turned into months, the crew's animosity piled atop their mistrust at receiving orders from a former slave like her, and a foreign one no less.

Amya knew better than to tempt the crew with promises she couldn't fulfill, so when she nodded to the Athenian she did so with certainty. "I studied the methods of Ionian philosophers," she explained, "and measured the direction of the setting sun each day. For four days, it's steered our course toward the island."

She placed her hands upon a large sheet of paper, and beckoned to the man. A gust of sea air buffeted the vessel, and he placed his palms down aside hers to keep the paper still. For a moment, he marveled at the paleness of her skin: more like milk than his own, or marble.

"Stop staring," she said, "and hand me the quill."

Grabbing it from him, she hurriedly sketched their route. The islands around this region were all but uncharted; great explorers had writ tales and poems of such journeys, often to receive the adulation of their audiences in Athens or Crete. Amya had no such notions. Across the blank page, she sketched line after line, etching cross-sections in smooth motions, intersecting with one another to show in exacting detail both the vessel's location and their imminent destination. She jabbed her forefinger at this small, unnamed isle and stated, "Star fall."

Six months prior, the light had burned through the sky. A blazing star, bright as the sun itself, crested through the night as it fell. For a moment the midnight streets of Athens had glimmered, stirring light sleepers from their rest. Eyes had turned to windows, none more keenly than Amya's. She'd rushed to her balcony to watch the falling star fade into the ocean's distance. She'd prayed for this, uttered soft pleas to Athena at the shrine to guide her.

She hadn't been the only one to set out to raise a ship for the journey. Many others had done the same; but for her, she'd paid all her life's savings, every meager earning she'd scraped together. It had taken half her lifetime to gather enough tetradrachm to buy her freedom, and her work in fishing trawlers brought her only a few more coins each day. She'd handed each of them, eagerly, to the Athenian in the hopes of sailing into the unknown to find the fallen star, and with it her dreams.

That night, she set a candle on the ship's prow. Silently she held a lit taper to it. The wax slowly melted, releasing the scent of honeysuckle. The vessel bore several such candles, their wax pooling in thick trails. Often the crew murmured discontentedly at her practice, seeing the reverence of any god other than Poseidon as insulting while at sea. Amya, though, etched thin symbols of the hunt in each candle she offered, proffering them not to the pantheon the crew worshiped but instead to what fleeting memories she had of her own people's beliefs. She'd been only a child when she'd last laid eyes on her homeland, although she knew it was far to the north, across distant lands and over a cold sea. She remembered dense green forests, and days filled with her mother's teachings. Amya learned to hunt, killing deer and rabbit, and for much of her adult life applied those same lessons to fishing. If any asked, she said she revered Artemis, which she reasoned was close enough to Vosegus and was enough to quell unnecessary questions. She set the candle down among the remnants of its siblings and prayed her hunt for the fallen star would be fruitful.

Two days passed, and a resounding call from the deck stirred Amya awake. She emerged to find the crew abuzz with excitement, eagerly pointing toward the faint glimmer of land. One of the crew, a young man she'd seen working the oars with great strength, hurried up to her and spoke in loud, excited words. Interjecting himself between them, the Athenian chuckled good-naturedly. "They didn't truly believe they'd see land," he explained. "They think perhaps you're an oracle."

By midday the isle had grown large, trees dotting smooth clifftops. However, as the ship drew close, a tremor of anxiety crossed through the crew; the cliffs

gave way to a small bay in which were docked three other ships. One rower released an oar and quickly spoke to the Athenian. Amya turned her head, inviting him to meet her at the prow. "Those ships," he said, "their sails bear many colors. Crete, see. And there, Minos."

"More will come," she said, shielding her eyes from the sea wind.

The Athenian nodded. "I hope this prize of yours is worth it."

Amya hoped so too. She thought of the falling star, shimmering like golden fire as it tore through the night. She'd expected others would come, bearing sails, banners, and swords, just as eager as she was to claim whatever lay at its fall.

As the ship entered the bay, Amya felt a chill. Crewmembers quickly lowered rope ladders, allowing them to dismount and walk upon sandy shores. She hung back, hand resting on her bow, nervous at the silence. No life stirred in the other ships, and the beach was bereft of people. She wondered why other travelers would leave their ships unguarded. The crew spread around the sands, enjoying the spacious freedom and clambering for a point from which they could survey the isle.

Amya approached the other ships and stared at their hulls. Aside from barnacles, they were unscathed, bearing no marks of battle. Turning, she walked until the sand turned to dry soil, and called to the Athenian. "Where are they all?"

A scream tore from the far end of the beach. Intuitively her fingers closed around her bow. Narrowing her eyes against the mid-morning sun, Amya hurried to two of the crew who lay broken on the sand. Several other men darted back; between them a large bull, larger than any man, stomped hooves the size of dinner plates against the ground. Fear widened her eyes at the beast's size.

Moving swiftly, Amya pulled and loosed an arrow at the beast. It stuck in the bull's hide. Ignoring the blow, the bull turned and snorted. A vast pair of inky wings erupted from its powerful back, like those of a black swan. It charged, its hooves dashing at the crew as it lifted into the air, its hind legs cracking an oarsman's skull. The bull turned, trampling another, as the crew turned to flee. Amya hurled herself against the sand, barely missing the bull's charge. Its gargantuan horns drew a thick scratch down her upper arm.

The bull rushed upward, turning in the air and hovering like a falcon spying its prey. Its eyes glimmered and erupted with flame, searing long rakes through the sky as it charged again. Amya loosed another arrow. This one found home in the beast's eye. Unflinching, the bull roared and rushed at her, horns lowered, while the arrow's shaft burned to cinders. Another scream rose from the deckhands, yet the cry was lost in a deafening crack. A forked arc of lightning tore through the bright mid-morning sky, colliding with the bull. Startled, the creature buckled in mid-air, spiraling to the ground.

The beast rose, its flank smoldering. As it turned to flee, Amya rubbed the afterimages of the lightning from her dazed eyes. One of the crew shouted, pointing to the far side of the beach where a robed man with dark skin and a thin-cropped white beard stood. Stumbling to her feet, she approached warily. "Who are you, who can hurl lightning at his foes? Zeus himself?"

With a smile, the man shook his head. "No," he replied in a thick Minoan accent. He spoke with a calm, wistful manner. "I'm no god, at least, no more than that bull. I came on the ship yonder."

"What was that beast?" she asked. "And where are your fellows? Slain? What of the others? And..."

He held up his hand. "Calm yourself. You've come a long way, chasing the falling star like the rest of us. Come, I'll show you to your prize. Gather your crew, those who are well enough to make the journey. Let the injured rest. Don't worry, the bull won't soon return, and my fellows have healers who'll see to them."

Amya nodded, lowering but not sheathing her weapon, and bid the Athenian to join her. Together they amassed a small group, and fell into step behind the Minoan. They set off, across fields beyond the beach and toward a small set of hills, which soon gave way to a thin descent.

As they clambered down the shale-speckled path, Amya glanced up and noted banners flickering in the distance. She peered, struggling to make out the colors.

"Keep your head down," whispered the Minoan. "We've been here but eight days, and already factions hold one another at blade-point."

"They fight over the star?"

The Minoan nodded. "In a way. It was no star that fell."

Pursing her lips, Amya glanced to the Athenian, hoping for guidance. The old man simply shrugged, clutching his staff tighter as he shuffled down the incline. Soon, the group passed beyond the banners

and reached a sharp ravine. Amya saw how the ground had ruptured, shattered by something massive. It continued onward, leading into a large crevasse of upturned land. Fog hung thick around the region, and as they proceeded they found the ground marked with tooth-like shards of metal.

"What is this?" she demanded.

"Try not to inhale too deeply," said the Minoan. "The animals did, and that's what turned them to beasts like the bull."

She reached out to touch one of the jagged, ruptured pieces of metal. "That doesn't answer my question." As her fingers touched it, she found the surface to be warm. "My father worked a forge, and I've never seen metal shaped like this. It's too large to be a weapon..."

"It is a chariot," said the Minoan. "Look."

Cautiously, he motioned further. Beyond the clouds, at the bottom of the chasm, sat a gargantuan object. It resembled a grand vessel, but torn and ruptured, its exterior rent open. Around the enormous structure, amidst scorched grass and blackened soil, thick beads and droplets of golden fluid glistened. Amya reached down to touch it. "It's this, isn't it?" she asked. "This substance, it gave you the might of the gods, didn't it? What is it?"

"I don't know," said the Minoan. "None of us do. A few of us, we've left the warring factions to join together in the hopes of understanding this."

"What makes you think anyone can understand this?" she asked. "This is the stuff of the gods; it's beyond our knowledge, surely."

The Minoan smiled, and motioned to the large, half-submerged side of the structure. "Perhaps, perhaps not. You see, the gods who sent this chariot to us, they left us a message."

Amya looked up, and through the dust-shrouded fog realized she could understand letters etched upon the metallic surface: *LION*.

AMBITION

Standing on a mountainside, Biriam looked over his future and balanced it against the blade of his axe. He wished, *would that I am remembered*. The edge was chipped — blunted and carved with the lives it'd ended. He called it Ambition. Biriam honed it, polishing the blade, working it with whetstones, hoping with each swing to carve his path into the future.

"Wake up," curled a coarse tone. "Sunrise."

Biriam sat up amidst furs and fleece. Darkness ebbed and thin rays of morning intruded from the tent flaps. He loathed the morning; awakening brought an urge to flinch, intuiting a boot colliding with his ribs to urge him to the day's work. But those days were shorn away on the edge of his axe, sacrificed to Ambition. Yet still in the in-between waking moments they stirred.

He shoved aside the tent's flap and surveyed his warriors.

Striding among his men, family bought by coin and the shared dreams of Biriam's future, he sipped from a water trough which reflected crimson skies the shade of the evening's soil. He thrust the metal cup into the hands of Garades, a red-haired youth from Nador who'd pledged a blood oath to the gang and was all but Biriam's battle-brother. "Drink well," he said.

Garades smiled, clapping his war-leader on his ox-wide shoulder. Biriam met the smile, held it in like a breath. He prayed it would never tarnish like the metal cup had.

He loved Garades, loved all his battle-brothers with a heart forged in seeped, shared blood. The youngster passed the cup back, and Biriam passed it to another: Perius, the fleet, the horse-rider. "We push forward tonight again," said the warlord. He knew any one of his family would give their lives for his dream; their dream.

And yet, he'd sacrifice any upon the edge of his axe-blade to achieve his Ambition.

During the long afternoon, when the sun crawled, he sat and schemed their siege. They'd watched the caravans for months as they extracted materials from the starfall. The wagons brought their goods behind the walls of an encampment two leagues distant, where the students of the gods kept them.

Perius drew in the sand, parting grains with a sharp-tipped stick. On one side, the fields and hill and Biriam's warband; on the other, their destiny. "They call themselves Lions," he said, crouching by the pictogram.

"We've killed lions before," laughed Garades. "I've seen Biriam choke the life from one."

"Probably a cub," Perius joked. Amusement rippled through them.

"Be serious," scolded Biriam. The fighters, like children, hushed at their father's word. "These are no cubs we fight."

He didn't need to remind them of the severity of the mission. Had it been any other, he'd have welcomed the levity. But for this, he would brook no nonsense.

The warlord Biriam's past was a millstone, a weight paid in shed blood. Even into his fortieth year he kept his hair cut short, like he had in his days in the Athenian military. A half-decade of banditry had followed. Many of the oldest in his family came from those days, and they'd fostered hopes of assailing mercantile roads for a comfortable life. Yet still, Biriam dreamed of more.

The evening met Biriam's crew drenched in blood. His axe-blade led the way, severing dusk and night as the sun slipped low. A cry rose from his ranks, the fighters eager for more. They'd planned for a siege, one which would shatter the encampment's defenses. Bitter bile rose in the warrior's throat. "Break the walls!" he screamed.

To his left, a battle-brother clashed with a defender: Adros, an older comrade. He'd joined Biriam's retinue shortly after the star fell, had sworn his blood oath soon afterward. Adros, who amused the band on spring evenings plucking drunkenly on his lyre. His opponent was formidable. Adros fell, his body ripped from shoulder to gut by spear-point. Biriam clenched his teeth, steeling himself to hold firm, urge forward. A section of wall collapsed into rubble beneath his charge. He rose, buoyed by rage, cresting a wave of his battle-brothers.

As the wall fell, he smashed Ambition against the skulls of two defenders, severing them like eggs, spilling crimson yolk. He laughed, remembering Adros. "These are no lions!" he yelled — it was performative, he knew, emphatic boastful confidence to drive his fighters on. "They call themselves the Society of the Lion, but look how they die!"

In his youth, they'd called him the Beast Biriam, for his brutality. Death walked with him, close enough his family knew to stay several steps aside lest they be struck down by his Ambition. They wouldn't be the first to do so. Such had marred his youthful days in service of Athenia's King, a savagery which earned him the loathing of his fellows-at-arms, a winding road of butchery which led to exile. Now, among his family, he retained his discipline — but not at the expense of his rage.

As the robe-clad Lions died, he beckoned his family. "In, through the break!" he bellowed, "Now!"

Garades and Perius hurried to his side. The youngster leaned down, scooping up scrolls which littered an upturned table. "I hoped we'd find fighters here," he said, "not these scholars. There's no fight in them."

Biriam snorted. "Don't congratulate yourself yet. Some here have turned their stolen treasures to their own benefit. That's why we liberate it."

Garades threw the papers down. "Their fortress is a vault. We'll find what we seek in its depths."

The gods did not choose the Lions, Biriam decided as the band broke door by door. At his lead, his battle-brothers put scholars and students to the blade, until the paving stones of the fortress ran slick with blood. "Burn the papers," said Biriam. He closed his eyes; the smell invaded his senses. With each step, he'd feared judgment; he wondered if he'd break upon Hades' branches. Certainly, if he didn't achieve his ambition. And if he did, he'd best Hades himself.

Resistance met the fighters as they breached the fortress, delving deeper into its heart. Combatants armed with blades, roused from the suddenness of the invasion, broke like waves upon Biriam's onslaught. Flames quickly enveloped much of the building's outer rings, sealing their escape and stemming the rout. They fell like stunted trees broken in thunderstorms. Only as the band pushed inwards did they meet true resistance.

A young fighter, Biriam did not truly remember his name, fell first to the empowered. The man who slew him wielded might unlike any mortal; he was muscled like an ox, blazing each step with impossible speeds. Several of Biriam's kin turned to flee as the air within the hallways turned thick and black as night, enshrouding them in panic.

"Hold firm!" he yelled, clutching the throat of one who ran from the Lions.

In that moment, Biriam was ready to slit the man's throat. His combatants needed to fear him more than they feared those who'd claimed the god's might. It'd take fear for those who trusted him to hurl themselves into death itself; this was the price his ambition demanded.

As the fortress burned, the band met the Lions. Biriam heaved, clefting atwain those who stood against him, but only after they'd first broken themselves against the warlord's brothers. As the ground grew uneven with the bodies of felled fighters, Biriam wondered how many mortal lives it'd take to drown those touched by gods.

The weight of lives ended balanced on either side of his axe's edge: his family on one side, those of the Society of the Lion on the other. A cost to be paid, souls to outweigh those who'd stolen the bounty of the starfall. Yes, the Society claimed to protect it; Biriam knew their claims. They'd shuffled away the

gifts of the gods, hidden it in vaults like this to study and understand. Yet they'd keep what secrets they'd found from him.

He brought his axe down again and again. He imagined he was hacking apart the lies, bringing mortal judgment to these Lions who thought themselves the gods' equals like Prometheus stealing the flame. A fire which, as far as the warlord was concerned, should be his.

Few of his family survived the onslaught. Amidst ruin, ashen ground, and bloodied, crumbling walls, the warlord emerged to walk, step by aching step, to the vault. The door crunched and shattered, its guardians rent apart. He laughed, shoving masonry aside. In the center sat several oaken chests, anointed with carved sigils. He pulled a lid open; it resisted to the last. In spite, Biriam tore at it, splintering the wood, twisting the locks. He wouldn't be denied. Not after coming so far. Not after having paid such a price.

Within were flasks, ornately decorated and hewn from fine calf leather. They smelled slightly of sunlight and honey.

Here, he thought, *the nectar, beverage of the gods*. He clutched one flask, pulling at the lid. The might of the gods swirled within, the power to do as he willed. He drank in his dreams. With his ambition realized, *he'd* be the one to divide life and death on the edge of his blade; not the Fates, not the gods.

He drank thirstily, eager to absorb his destiny.

Heat burned within, raging like a fire, like his fury. It swelled to a crescendo. He stumbled, dropping the flask. His body became power itself, shifting, might and strength combined. The roof of the chamber broke apart against the bursting corona of his might. Searing flames ignited in his eyes. Biriam — or the man he once was — evaporated. In an eternity lingering for a fragmented moment, he felt the greater part of himself seared away.

Instead, there was only his purest sense: a singular thought, the center of the flame which had been him. In that moment, he was reborn.

As he stumbled free from the ruins, survivors fled. The faces of those he couldn't remember fully turned to him in horror, their bodies small, fragile. He brought one of his hooves down upon them. Any kinship he'd once shared with them was half-forgotten, the memory of a dream. He looked into the night and, for a moment, tried to remember what that word which sat on his tongue — *ambition* — had ever truly meant. Whatever it was, it was meaningless now. All that mattered was appetite.

He howled. Somewhere in the mists, the Fates laughed.

ODE OF ARES

My dearest Theremis,

As you advised, I traveled out from Crete to the north, keeping my back to the mountains. I arrived in the town you told me of after three days, yet I fear I arrived too late. The man you spoke of so adamantly has definitely been here.

The town is abuzz with talk of his deeds. I quickly found a small hostel to stay the night and asked the landlady to tell me if she had heard of him. Scarce had I given her the description of a man in fine red robes and golden jewelry, then words fled from her in excitement. "Yes, stranger," she told me, "the man has been to town. But sadly, he didn't stay here in my humble hostelry; oh, but to imagine if he had! I could say my humble place had been blessed by the gods themselves!"

She was not the only one. Venturing into the marketplace, I met people replete with tales of the man. Truly, the people are left astonished by him and the miracles he provided. One man, a store owner, told me the traveler stopped by his stall, flocked with a crowd of admirers. "Do you believe in the might of the gods, shop keeper?" the man asked. When the store owner shook his head, the traveler smiled and lifted his entire cart, crates and barrels and all, above his head. "Be blessed," he told the store owner, "for now you may believe."

The traveler didn't stay long, but when he left, the purses of the town's inhabitants were significantly lightened. I speak not only of fine foods and wine, which was given to him aplenty. With discretion, I asked to be shown where he had lingered and was brought to a central square. Here, the traveler had set down a small sack, and asked that any who doubted his divinity might bring forth a challenge. Until the sun set, he broke the hardiest bricks asunder, wrestled any challenger to the ground, hurled the heaviest rocks beyond the town limits, and bent the strongest steel. For each, he asked a donation from the people, that his temple may be built.

He left town, sack heavy with money. It is as you told me, Theremis. For eight months, in towns across Greece, tales of this traveler in red robes circulate.

In towns such as these he arrives, one after the other, this finely-dressed man bedecked in luxurious garb. He impresses the inhabitants with his powers, leaving them astonished and eager to part with their hard-earned coin in reverence. Then he leaves, journeying to the next town and repeating the same performance.

Worst, I fear, is not merely the use of the gifts we share since imbibing the gods' nectar; that he uses it to line his own pockets is dubious enough. What truly strikes at me, my friend, is the tales the man tells. Every person he fleeces tells the same tale: That they gave their money to Ares himself!

The Society's suspicions are doubtless correct. From the tales I've heard, he's been empowered by nectar. How he came into possession of this is a mystery; we've done all we can to preserve the sanctity of the fluid to prevent unscrupulous or nefarious minds from abusing its gifts.

Since the discovery of nectar, I've put significant effort into preventing the substance getting to the hands of those who'd use it to pursue their own ends. For many of my colleagues who pursue this same goal, it's a matter of ensuring the people's safety. Were nectar to find its way to warmongers, brigands, or worse, its latent power could tip the balance of warfare forever. The resulting chaos would surely be devastating. But more insidious is the risk this man poses — one who uses the nectar's blessing to sway the people's faith.

Theremis, you know me well. I'm not a pious man, and I've scarce ever set foot in a temple. The gods have done little for me, yet others dedicate their lives to their worship. Some among our Society believe this nectar to be a gift from them, sent to elevate us. I don't; instead, I recognize its danger, and the danger of those who'd desire it. Theremis, understand me well. Men like this traveler seek power in any way they can and use it to dominate others. This I won't allow.

Make this my pledge, my friend, to all the gods you may believe in: I'll find this man and make him pay for his abuses.

I stayed in the town for another day before journeying on, asking the townspeople which road the traveler took. I followed him. His path led me through two more towns, never venturing near a busy city. I followed his route close to Attica, then ventured north into Thebes. In each place, the same story unfolded: people left bereft of their belongings, having sold their life's comforts to fill the coffers of a man masquerading as a god. This same tale repeated again and again. Farmers struggled to feed their families, living in the hope of the traveler's blessings would somehow fill their hungry stomachs.

My anger boiled, and I set my mind to finding a suitable punishment for his crimes. I couldn't slay him. My nectar's blessing didn't grant me strength in that manner. Even if it had, I refused to let myself resort to simple murder. Instead, I schemed a great plan.

On the eighth day, I came to the town of Enbir, on the shores of a great river. It was here in this small fishing village where I finally caught up with him, and set about enacting my plan.

I rested at a hostelry, and in the morning I ate my breakfast and ventured out to find the traveler. This proved to be little challenge, as he drew a large crowd wherever he went. Among the throng of townsfolk he stood, in the midst of the market as he'd done before, surrounded by his audience. I joined the crowd and watched him as he wrestled.

The man he fought was the town's blacksmith — a towering man with heavy muscles honed from decades of working the toughest iron. Despite this, the traveler held the blacksmith's brawny arms locked in his own. The gathered crowd stood agape at this feat; the stranger shucked his red silks aside to reveal a physique less akin to man and more befitting an Olympian.

With a grunt, the blacksmith folded, his knees buckling. Even so he refused to admit defeat; sweat poured from his brow as he strained against the stranger's grasp. His struggle was in vain. The traveler pushed down relentlessly with a mountainous might, barely a flicker of effort marring his rugged features. The blacksmith fell to the sands, nursing his strained arms.

A laugh broke from the traveler. "You did well!" he jeered. "Very well, for a mortal. Few can hold their own against Ares himself for as long as you did!" With a sweeping gesture, the man waved his arms to the crowd. "Who else here would try their best? Please, place your coins in the sack and see if you can stand against the might of a god!"

Murmurs rose from the crowd. It was clear the traveler's performance was soon to end; he'd bested most of the strongest in town and there were few left willing to face him. I stepped forward. "I'll challenge you, great Ares!"

The traveler looked me over, a confident smile etched on his bearded face. For a moment, I feared he'd sense our commonality, as though the nectar within us both would beckon to him. If he sensed any familiarity, he didn't show it. "You wish to wrestle, then?"

I shook my head. "Clearly I'm no match for you in might," I explained, "but as I traveled to town, I noticed a bull feasting in a field nearby. The beast is vast, twice the size of any man. Even you."

A ripple of amusement passed through the crowd, and a twitch of irritation flickered in the traveler's brow.

My barb had hit home. "Would that I could see you steer the brute out of the farmer's wheat field. Drag it by the horns, if you can. That would be a feat worthy of an Olympian!"

The traveler sneered. "Well," he said, mockingly, "if you fear facing me yourself, I'll certainly meet your challenge! Throw your coin in the sack." I did so, and the traveler headed to the field, the crowd following eagerly in his wake. I hurried past and threw open the gate to where the bull sat, lazily chewing on the farmer's wheat-stalks. The traveler strode confidently toward his foe while onlookers watched from behind the wooden fence. Gradually the bull rose, easily the height of the traveler and twice as broad.

The bull spat out its half-chewed cud and dug its hooves against the ground. With an angry snort that caused the crowd to step back in awe, the beast rushed the stranger. He met it head-on, clasping its horns in his brawny arms. His sandals dug into the muddied ground as he clenched his teeth, refusing to give an inch. The two powerful beings pressed against one another, pushing with all their considerable might. Then, with a grunt, the traveler twisted the bull's horns, forcing it to the side. It staggered, its powerful legs scrambling. Clutching on its neck, the traveler pulled the bull, inch by inch. He shouted a warning, demanding the crowd make way for him.

He dragged the huge beast into the empty countryside where he turned it loose and then returned,

head held high in triumph, to the cheering crowd. He sought me out with a grin. "Well, have I met your challenge?" he bellowed.

At this, I canted my head and hummed. "It was impressive, doubtless," I said. "But I swear, it looked as though you struggled. Surely such a lowly beast is beneath such considerable efforts for a god?"

The man snorted with contempt and glowered. "You still doubt me?"

"Oh no, not at all!" I said. "Only..."

"Only what?"

"Only ... it would be better if you had a test truly deserving of your divinity. One which was worthy of Ares, and not these paltry slights you are left with now."

At this, the traveler blustered. "If you have a feat worthy of me, name it now and I will best it!"

A smile spread across my lips. "Then hear this: I know of a beast. A large hound, its fur as crimson as flame and eyes like stoked embers. It bears three large heads, each of which gnashes jaws filled with teeth as large as your leg. Recover one of the hound's teeth, that you may wear it around your neck as a sign of your prowess in battle, for it won't relinquish them willingly."

The traveler threw back his head. "Very well! Tell me, how will I find this beast?"

"Travel to the west from here for four days" I said. "You'll arrive at a river. In the hours before sunset, it'll be shrouded by mist. Wait at the bank, and a ferryman will arrive. He's an old friend, and if you place this gold coin in his hand he will take you on your way."

The man who claimed to be Ares plucked the coin from my hand and tucked it into his robes. He offered no hesitation, and strode confidently onward.

Ah Theremis, would that I could tell you some humorous conclusion of this fraud's epic and recount his shameful return to the town. Yet six weeks have passed and not a word of his escapades has reached me. I've traveled from town to town, and none have seen him since he set out, unwittingly, for Hades' realm.

Perhaps one day, he'll return. But between you and me, my friend, I doubt it. Even though I've no belief in the gods, the traveler certainly did. I wonder if, perhaps, he believed himself truly a hero of his own tale.

I look forward eagerly to my next assignment.

Yours, Dimetrus.

A TASTE OF HONEY

He watched Achilles from across an ocean of sand, hard-packed and pressed with the weight of a thousand footfalls, beneath a sun which left the land parched and the fiery-haired man's skin sore from exposure. A thin heat-haze surrounded Achilles, causing his image to waver, as if retreating into the future, instead of approaching. "Did you see?" he asked, a bright smile causing his sweat-slicked brow to wrinkle.

"Aye," answered Patroclus, "I did!"

Achilles shrugged his bare shoulders. Leather creaked as he dropped his bronze shield to the ground. It landed with a clatter, loose flecks of blood washed from its face and flecking the sand in its wake. "Four!" he announced, as if he didn't quite believe the accomplishment himself. "Four of the bastards. Here!" He called to a youngster, thrust out his sword in one lithe hand.

The boy hurried over, taking the blade. Its surface was dented, bearing the marks of battle, but the boy accepted it, eyes wide. "You mean it, sir?" he asked, staring at the prize.

Patroclus knew the boy. His name was Jerome, but he doubted Achilles remembered it. No doubt, the man thought his cast-off tools of war would make an aspirational gift for the child — payment for the youngster's aid in the siege. "Take it!" shouted Patroclus with a laugh from the shelter of the tent where he sat. "Take it, before the great Achilles flies off to Olympus to sit beside Ares himself!"

The boy clutched the blade, beaming in admiration, and retreated into the ramshackle mash of tents. Patroclus felt a pang of regret for the child, knowing he was not the only one who had followed in the warriors' wake, desperate for food or coin, to find a home or work, or to boast that they, too, had stood side-by-side with the gifted fighters.

Achilles trudged into the tent, nudging several cushions into shape with his heel. "You shouldn't jest," he said, slumping down.

"Why not?" asked Patroclus. "You think the gods will grow angry, and take back your gifts?"

Achilles laughed. "Do you think they might?"

"They won't."

He looked at Patroclus, staring into the man's dark eyes. "You know that?"

Patroclus nodded. The gods' nectar they'd shared together one midwinter, so many seasons

before, worked its wonder in different ways. Forging their bodies anew, Achilles had marveled at the might bestowed upon him. They said he was undefeatable, although he doubted these rumors. He was faster, yes. Stronger too, yet others who had tasted ambrosia had found similar strength and still found death.

Unfastening his sandals, he looked upward through the busy tents and into the clouds. "It isn't worth it," Achilles said, not taking his eyes from above.

"You killed four."

"And for what? Four more to populate Elysium, four more bodies in the sands out there, and naught changes. Troy stands. The kings throw us at one another."

Patroclus leaned over, recovering an apple from his plate. "We're soldiers. It's our duty."

"We should leave."

He stared at Achilles. Such words sat ill in Patroclus' heart. "You cannot." He held out the apple. "You've to kill Hector."

"And if we did leave?" asked Achilles, turning his head. He took the apple. "Would that break your damned foresight?"

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The evening had grown long, sunset painting the sky hues of orange. Achilles lowered the bowl, the taste of honey lingering on his tongue. His arms ached; his entire body bore bruises from the trials. They'd been harsh, combat and endurance feats demanding his greatest efforts. He struggled to stand upright. His left leg was weakened and damaged, his right eye swollen and blackened. But stand he did, clasping the bowl which was his prize.

Three times Achilles sipped from the bowl that held the essence of the gods. He'd fought for each mouthful, pushed himself, and shown his exceptionalism. His ardor to prove his worth to the fellowship drove him through his trials to where he now stood, deserving the might of one of the Circle of Heroes. Their fellowship accepted nothing less, holding what little ambrosia they possessed securely, granting it only to the most promising recruits. Their descendants would call them demigods, yet Achilles didn't care to think so far ahead. He watched, awestruck, as pain and weariness fell from his arms, stiffness retreating from his legs, bruises vanishing.

"Come." He turned, holding his hand to Patroclus. "We proved ourselves together."

Patroclus, quiet and often sullen in those days, hesitantly approached the dais to take his share. As he did, tipping the bowl to his lips, the liquid's honey taste filled his mouth. Time itself stilled, and infinity filled him.

Images of the past — his youth, schooling, tutorship, and training — assailed Patroclus. Broken glass paintings tumbled around him, absorbing him into their descent. He both saw and felt each moment of his life laid out before him on a starry field. He pushed back, forcing the images away, squeezing his eyes shut. Too much. Too many images. He saw lives beyond his own, including that of Achilles, so close and near. There were many more: His parents, their families, the ancestors of everybody he'd ever met. As his gaze grew broader he realized he could see the lives of everyone who had been, throughout a world far beyond the countries he knew, passing back into time before...

Then, he looked to the future and saw all there was to see: The lives of thousands —no, billions — of people; empires that would rise and fall; explorers' travels through the world and past the skies; the lives and deaths of gods. *Too much!* he cried soundlessly, forcing the sight from his eyes. In screaming despair, he pushed the memories away, closing his glimpse of events long gone and far ahead into as thin and as narrow a view as he could.

When time moved again, he lay on the marbled floor, bowl beside him. The taste of honey lingered on his tongue. Achilles crouched beside him. Patroclus stared at him, through those narrow eyes which could see the world, and watched the man's entire life ahead of him.

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"They seek fighters," he said.

Three summers had passed. Achilles traveled, oft in the company of Patroclus. Tales spread of their accomplishments. Achilles was a fighter like no other, felling terrifying beasts and mortal foes alike. His blade was a haze of speed, giving rise to rumors he was blessed by Hermes. His lithe body shrugged off all but the most grievous injuries.

At his side, always, was Patroclus. Although he bore fewer tales of his prowess, his skill found him darting beneath the sweeping arms of many brutes to drive home a timely fatal blow. People said he was gifted with fortune. He was no stronger than any other, but could readily step aside before an arrow whistled past, or knew preternaturally the

perfect moment to strike home. In tandem, the pair were a devastating combination; where Patroclus shouted directions, Achilles dove to make the kill, as if his partner could see the opportunities and risks to come.

Secretly, they knew this was precisely the gift Patroclus possessed.

For three years, Patroclus' visions guided them. His foresight granted them victories in war, in turn bolstering their reputation among the Circle of Heroes. Words of their deeds echoed across the lands; they'd bested monsters and beasts together with Achilles' might and Patroclus' prescience. Patroclus made use of his gift in secret also. Foreseeing the petty arguments and jealousies which threatened to strain their relationship, he shared these with Achilles and deftly weathered the worst of the storms. Sown with seeds of his foreknowledge, their love blossomed, leaving Patroclus fearful the Fates would take revenge for using his insights for selfish aims.

"Yes," said Patroclus, "they'll lay siege to Troy."

"And we will go?" asked Achilles. The pair sat, sipping the last of the summer's cider, watching the sun dip beneath the horizon.

"Not for another ten summers," he answered with certainty. "But we will."

Achilles had learned to hear his wisdom and not question it. He tipped the cup to his lips, finishing its contents. "So, I'll live another ten years?"

Laughing, Patroclus nodded. "Yes. You'll live long enough to be a hero."

He set the cup down. "And how will I die?"

Patroclus remained silent. Moving his gaze from the sun, he stared at Achilles: his sun-bleached curls, his eyes the color of roast chestnuts. A man, yes, but with a youngster's relish for life, eager to grasp each year in both hands.

Slowly, Achilles rolled over to face him, bedsheets wrapping around him. "Will I die at Troy?"

The answer lingered on Patroclus' lips. It hung unspoken, an image seated in the corner of his vision which he tried to ignore. For three years, he'd tried with all his will to pretend it would not come to pass. The vision, its knowledge, sat heavy in the forefront of Patroclus' mind, tasting of honey on his lips.

•••

The siege of Troy wore on. In its early months, the bitter sands had grown marshy with the blood of the fallen. The war dragged on longer, and those gradually gave way to dust. Achilles watched many fighters struggle to find food, weakening by the day. Yet still they remained, entrenched and encamped. While his fellows faltered, weakened, and perished, the ambrosia in his blood buoyed him.

He remembered Patroclus' words as his lover cleaned a deep wound on his upper arm. "Stop squirming," Patroclus chided, drawing a stinging cloth anointed with stinging liquids, "you're not immortal."

Achilles chafed at the words, wondering if he'd been too arrogant. The injury would've killed anyone else. He winced at the burn, "You knew it wouldn't kill me."

"I knew," answered Patroclus, dipping the cloth into the bowl, squeezing it. Crimson blossomed, swirling into the liquid mixture of herbs, oils, and thistles. "But I might be wrong."

"You've never been wrong."

Slowly Patroclus squeezed the cloth, pouring out the excess water. He didn't answer. He hoped his sight of Achilles being carried from the battlefield, bloodied, the flush of life in his skin washed to a pale hue, would be wrong. With each day the image grew clearer: a ragged tear breaking the skin, muscle, and ligaments at the curve of the leg, blood pouring like an overflowing river as the man people thought to be the son of a god convulsed in his dying moments. Patroclus caught glimpses of other times, years when Achilles' name lived on, remembered by the wound which killed him.

Patroclus prayed to all the gods that he'd be wrong.

"I've given thought to what we'll do after the war," announced Achilles.

"After?"

Achilles rubbed his shoulder, working the stiffness from his wounded arm. "I wish to sail beyond Thrinacia, past even Scheria. I wish to raise a fleet and travel out across the seas, like the tales told by explorers."

"They already sing of your accomplishments."

"I don't hope for song," answered Achilles, shaking his head. "I'll do so for myself. I've fought enough monsters and seen enough death. I wish to see life, the world."

Patroclus wiped Achilles' wound one final time. "Are you asking if that's what will occur?"

Achilles stood. "No. I'm saying that's what I'll do. What *we'll* do together, if you will?"

Patroclus stared at him. Despite his injury, he shone with confidence and certainty in the future he'd envisioned, even without the blessing of prescience. In all their years, Patroclus had never told Achilles his fate.

And I never will, he thought as he stood and grasped Achilles' shoulder. "I'd travel to Stygia alongside you," he said. He smiled, as hopefully as he could, trying to ignore the lingering taste of honey on his lips.

FEATHERS IN THE WAVES

The old man dreamed of the broken child: Limbs twisted and features fragmented almost beyond recognition, the boy felt no pain. Pain, the man remembered in his dreaming state, had fallen from him, as surely as he had fallen from the sky. The dreams came each night, coaxing memories the old man wished he could forget. He had spent half a lifetime healing, and another half trying to bury the child he had been.

Waves. It was, in the absence of pain, the sea's movement which brought sensation back to the child. Unsettled blue, swirled with muddied crimson, babbled at gray pebbled sands. In his dreams he barely remembered the fall, but he remembered the sea and shore.

"Hello?" beckoned a voice.

The old man rubbed his eyes, still weighty with dream-sand. He sat up in bed. The sound of waves came unbidden, intrusions from his slumber bleeding to a faint rumble from the nearby sea.

Another rattle sounded against the cottage door. "Sire, might we speak?"

The tang of salt and copper stirred in his mouth. The old man probed a loose, rotting tooth and spat. "I'm not decent," he replied.

"We'll wait," came another voice. This one was higher, more eager.

Like a child's, he thought. *Impetuous*. He stood, shaky. Somewhere below his knee, some rough southerly place between cartilage and joint complained. It had never been the same since that day. In his dream the memory was clear: the leg shattered, twig-cracked. He couldn't feel the agony, not with his neck equally twisted, but he could feel the sea's caress. That, and the taste of salt and copper, and the sight of feathers bobbing on the waves.

He pulled a shawl around his waist. The fabric didn't protect him much from the winter's chill, but the inclement wind at the bay during colder seasons bothered him little. He opened the door.

"Are you him?" asked the first youth, before the old man gathered his thoughts. There were three all told, perhaps between twenty and thirty seasons. Two had a native look and Athenian cut to their clothes while the third, darker-skinned and by far the younger of the three, stood at the back exuding anxiety.

He stared.

"They say you died," said the eldest.

"Do they?" asked the old man. Striding back into the cottage, he lit a thin tapered lantern with a shaking hand and set it on a bare wood table. A waft of scent from the candle, or perhaps the sea, stung his senses: honey. "Is that what they say?"

"Yes," said the eldest, voice a-tremble. "We don't wish to intrude."

"Yet you are!" He rummaged on his shelf, rattling clay pots and bowls before he thrust a jar into the youngest's hand. "Help by milking the cow. I don't have enough breakfast for the four of us."

They scurried off, and he walked toward an outcropping to wait for them to finish the task. He had died, the old man decided, in the sea, on the shore. Died fifty seasons before, maybe more, tasting the waves and pebbles and tiny sand-crawlers trespassing across the skin of his lips. A lone gull screeched its call, breaking his daydream, but still the feel of water lingered. No, more than water; a wavering, rolling sway, lapping at him as the sea on the shore. He felt old and cracked, like driftwood.

The eldest of the students, whose name was Heron, returned. "The cow is milked," he stated, holding the jar in offering. The student's posture reminded the old man of the Athenian priestesses from a memory half-forgotten, broken, weightless. "Now, will you tell us?"

"I have nothing to tell," the old man said.

"But you lived!" the youngest student argued.

The old man snorted. Clutching his stave for weight, he sat on the roundest and most well-worn of the rocks to watch the sun's reflection in the sea.

"Damn you," hissed the student. He threw down the jar. It smashed on the ground. Bitter milk twisted its way through lax grass threads. "We came all this way to hear your words."

He could have looked up. For the longest time, the old man thought, *I could have looked up*. If he did so

now, he'd see the eyes of the child. He'd see the person he once was staring back at him, defiant, earnest, light as the wind. He'd see himself, before the fall, before the waves, before the light.

"Fine!" the student said. "We three mean to take the ambrosia, and sought you as a teacher. If you will not, we will do so without your wisdom."

The three stepped back, one pace, another. Sandals scuffed against small pebbles, and the old man said, "I would give you all I know, had I any to give."

"You lived!" insisted the middle student.

"Lived?" asked the old man.

Live, the voice had said to the broken child.

The old man could scarcely remember the voice, yet he remembered the words, and the light. The taste of the light. A light which filled him, moving from outside to within. He absorbed it, drawing heat and life, renewal. The dreams always ended before the memory of the light, so vast and full, like the sun, burning away the taste of the sea salt.

The light had made the boy whole, and it had offered more. The old man shut his eyes, feeling the age in his body, the weight on his joints. Some days, he wished he could fly.

The taste of ambrosia lingered on his tongue, as did the image of the woman kneeling beside the broken child, copper cup in hand, cradling his broken head. *Live*, she'd said.

"I lived," said the old man to the students, "if you can call it that."

The eldest turned his head this way and that. "Here," he asked, spreading arms wide. "Why in this cottage? A man like you, you could be..."

"A what? A teacher? A governor? A warrior? Which life should I lead with this gift? I made my choice: I'm a farmer and a hermit. I tend my sheep and grow my crops and spend the evenings watching the waves and the sun. Is that not enough?"

"It could be more," said the student. "Could it not?"

Could it not, thought the old man. *Could we not soar higher, sail upward, reach ever further?* "Aye," said the old man, "I guess you could. You very well could."

He could indeed.

In his memories, the broken child stood. His unsteady legs, like those of an old man, adjusted to his weight once again. He stood among the waves, and the driftwood, and broken springs and strands of leather and feathers. The woman held his hand. The boy's head blazed with the light; his body burned with it.

Light engulfed him once more, only now it brought renewal, not death. It seared him, momentarily, his mouth contorted to a scream. He had not screamed as he fell, but his father's scream had followed him down. That cry had been so keen, searing through the boy, piercing him like a blade, he could scarce remember any word his father had spoken before.

"*You* could be more," said the old man, "but I could not."

"Please," said the student, "I seek only your wisdom."

"Then seek out my father's pupils. Turn the gifts the light of the gods, this *ambrosia*, grants you to some good. But speak not of me, nor of my life here."

Nor, he thought, *of the woman*. He recalled someone tall, clad in a gown of white, watching the boy as he rose once again. When he tried to remember her face, though, her features changed every time. Perhaps that was her gift. For years since, he had sought her. Tales led him far from home, far from where he'd died and rose again. He wondered, did she toy with them? Perhaps she truly was one of the gods, for all the curses he could spit at her.

It had been so long since the old man had seen the face of his mother. Perhaps it could have been her.

The student bowed his head. "Is there truly naught you can teach us?"

Stiffly, the old man rose. Wrinkled fingers brushed loose gull feathers from the rock. A young bird, more fluff and beak than wings, gave a raucous caw from where it sat on the ground, alone. It pecked needle-like, at the man's calloused hand. "They're abandoned, sometimes" he mumbled, scooping the bird up in his palm. It jabbed at him again, more hungry than aggressive. "Or they wash up on the shore. Sometimes they learn to fly again. Other times they stay grounded, living here by the rocks."

The small bird bit down on his finger. Small serrations brought memories to the surface of wooden splinters, sharp and cracked. They smelled of melted honeyed glue, stitched to leather, basted in sunlight. Pain, hot like sunlight, jammed through his nerves. The old man ignored it. He'd felt pain before, from the sun's fire, from the golden liquid which had stitched the boy's torn limbs back together into the strongest they could be.

"Will you fly, little one?" he asked, cupping the small bird. "Even if you fall, will you get up and fly again?"

The student turned, walking back to his fellows. Tension bunched in his brow. "We traveled far!" he shouted back.

The old man shook his head. "I wasn't asking the bird," he whispered. He knew the power of the gods. He'd grasped it twice and felt its burn like sunlight on bare skin. It had seared his wings. He muttered a silent prayer for the students, who thought the goodness in their hearts, or the strengths of their will, would keep them safe through the fall. The fall all who took the power of the gods into themselves experienced.

As the students left, the old man reached out, uncurling fingers. The small gull sat, bundled and still.

The bird would not fly, the old man realized. Even when cared for, even when nursed back to health, it refused. Its eyes scanned the distant horizon, yearning, but unwilling. Instead it nestled, home.

Gradually, the old man set the bird back down on the rock, knowing it wouldn't move. Knowing he, too, wouldn't. His mouth pulled itself to a smile. *Damn those students*, he thought, *they won't learn*. How could they, when he himself had not?

The old man looked back at the cottage, his home for so many years, a brick birdcage from which he couldn't fly. *A gift wasted*, he thought. He'd been burned twice by the light, once felled and once reborn. His refusal to take flight again pulled the memories of the broken boy to him nightly. He closed his eyes; fragments of a half-buried past washed to the shore, speckled with driftwood, broken wings and feathers.

Quietly, he wept, turning his face toward the sun, hoping the light would burn away the tears and the long years that had passed. He stepped through the grass, still wet with morning dew, fingers unfastening his robe. It fell, sunlight folding across skin. Muscles, unused for ages, flexed, and for a moment the old man was a boy again — not broken on a shore, but standing alongside his father, atop a tower and ready to soar. Stepping forward, wings unfurled from his back, feathers upturned. He would not fall into the waves. The sun lifted him up.

Feathers lifted him into the sky. They felt so unfamiliar to the old man, like an arm, half-mended, stiff from underuse. An ache settled heavily into his back, forcing him to push against it, straining against the years and the waves. A cry broke from his throat, a bellow of renewal. A broken boy, whole again. A fledgling gull breaking from its nest. The sky, the ascendancy of the gods, and a sun as golden as ambrosia. With one great beat of his wings, the old man pushed himself upward, and flew into the sun.

INTRODUCTION

I asked Gilgamesh once why he chose to protect me. He said, "When you love something, you protect it. It is the most natural thing in the world."
—Thena, The Eternals

Welcome to **Trinity Continuum: Aegis**, a game of epic adventure and exploration set during Greece's Iron Age. The setting features figures and events from history and mythology, viewed through the lens of the Trinity Continuum. In this game you'll play Champions, Oracles, and Olympians — characters who have come into contact with the mysterious substance called ambrosia and been transformed into Inspired individuals with powers similar to Talents, Psiads, and Novas millennia ahead of their counterparts' times.

These characters live in an age of wonder and discovery. People in the ancient world made amazing strides in science, exploration, and philosophy, all while grappling (sometimes literally!) with gods and monsters. About a decade ago, a mysterious and life-changing event occurred: bright streaks flashed across the sky and witnesses watched as a fiery object crashed into Mount Olympus. While Greece was the site of the main impact, other pieces of the object landed throughout the world, creating heroes and horrors wherever they touched down.

THE ERA

Aegis takes place after the Bronze Age collapse, in approximately 1200 to 900 BCE. During this period, once great civilizations fell into ruin. Historians have many theories as to what might have happened — invasion from the elusive Sea Peoples, revolts, famine, disease, and natural disasters — but no one knows for sure what transpired. So devastating was the decline that not only were written records lost or destroyed, writing itself nearly disappeared from certain regions of the world. Art styles and technological innovations regressed. Trade tapered off as wars and raiders destroyed well-traveled routes or made them too dangerous for merchants to risk their lives or their wares. This also meant that essential supplies, including building materials, textiles, and food could no longer reach societies dependent on them.

While the era later came to be referred to as the Greek Dark Ages, all was not lost. Humans are resilient, and communities rallied around one another for protection and survival. It's during this period that the starfall occurred. Now, members of the Colleges that formed in the wake of that event fan out across the world, the sparks of innovation, exploration, and hope still bright in their hearts.

OMENS OF THINGS TO COME

The following timeline highlights events beginning in Greece's Bronze Age (around 1750–1050 BCE) through its Dark Age (1200–900 BCE). While the Mount Olympus impact began the Aegis era, other, smaller starfalls — with equally mysterious origins — were recorded across the globe in the centuries leading up to it. Their effects were more localized, but they too spawned heroes and monsters. Scholars, seers, and scientists have connected these to the main event, regarding them as precursors or warnings. Storyguides who wish to set their games before the Olympian starfall might declare that their campaign's setting was the site of a precursor impact.

SHAPING THE FUTURE

Champions, Oracles, and Olympians have the whole world lying before them. Mysterious places beckon, their wonders as yet unexplored. Monsters threaten villages — terrifying creatures that devour entire hunting parties or demand tribute in human

lives. Citizens cry out for a hero to save them from tyrants, famine, invaders, and disaster. Brilliant minds toil in workshops and laboratories, their thoughts ablaze with inspiration. They build fantastic machines on cliffs overlooking the sea, create automata defenders, or discover new ways to take flight. In this game, your characters are lights amidst this Dark Age, beacons of hope and humanity holding out against the encroaching darkness.

With their newfound powers, Aegis' heroes work to rebuild what's been lost, visiting war-torn regions and lending their aid to survivors. They set out on dangerous journeys to retrieve wondrous artifacts, dive into the heart of churning maelstroms, or confront the forces of fate. All the while, they grapple with what their new abilities mean: Do they use them for personal gain or to serve their communities? Are they still the same person they were before? What changes can they bring about, and how far will they go to see them through?

Since so little is known about the events that occurred during these years, your characters' actions may change the course of history. Events may occur decades or centuries ahead of their original time, or never happen at all. Remember that the setting is a continuum — what these Inspired heroes do may echo down the timeline, altering events far into the future. Or records of their deeds may be lost like so many others, victim to some unknown cataclysm or perhaps even intentionally obscured to keep the future on track.

THEMES AND MOODS

Trinity Continuum: Aegis continues to explore the **Trinity Continuum's** themes of hope, sacrifice, and unity — in an age where societies

c. 1700 BCE	Beginning of Bronze Age in China.
c. 1600 BCE	The Minoan eruption, one of the largest volcanic eruptions in history, destroys Minoan settlements on the island of Thera and the coast of Crete. Its effects are felt worldwide.
c. 1600 BCE	Shang dynasty begins, earliest evidence of Oracle Bone Script.
c. 1600 BCE	Beginning of Mycenean Greece.
1595 BCE	Hittites sack Babylon.
c. 1550 BCE	Beginning of Egypt's New Kingdom.
c. 1550 BCE	Stonehenge built.
c. 1512 BCE	Flood of Deucalion heralds the end of Greece's Golden Age.
c. 1500 BCE	Preclassic period of Maya civilization.
c. 1500 BCE	Sudās Paijavana leads the Bharatas to victory in the Battle of the Ten Kings.
c. 1400 BCE	Beginning of Olmec civilization.
1350–1330 BCE	Reign of Perseus and Andromeda in Mycenae.
1346 BCE	Pharaoh Akhenaten orders construction of Akhetaten.The city becomes Egypt's capital until his death.
1326 BCE	Pharaoh Tutankhamun dies and is buried in the Valley of the Kings.
c. 1235–1245 BCE	Labors of Heracles
c. 1250 BCE	Jason and the Argonauts begin their quest to find the Golden Fleece.
1207 BCE	Pharaoh Merneptah rebuffs attacks by the Sea Peoples.
c. 1200 BCE	Greek Dark Ages begin.
1194–1184 BCE	Trojan War.
1184–1174 BCE	Odysseus' long journey home to Ithaca.
c. 1100 BCE	End of Egypt's New Kingdom.
1046 BCE	Shang overthrown by the Zhou dynasty.

A Note on Accuracy

While this book presents an overview of some of the world's civilizations around this time and refers to various myths, this is neither a history book nor a scholarly work. The information is presented to give players and Storyguides a broad-strokes feel for the setting in a short amount of space. If we've introduced inaccuracies, inconsistencies, or anachronisms, it's likely because we're trying to convey complex historical, social, and economic events as briefly as possible. You're welcome to delve deeper into them at your table, or swap in your favorite versions of a myth as best fits your story.

This is also permission for Storyguides and players to explore the events that catch their interest. If you want to skip back to the fall of Troy, or introduce Socrates a century or two early because that's what sparks your players' imaginations, go for it. Things are going to veer wildly off course, and that's ***cool***.

are in decline and survival sometimes feels uncertain, these are the tenets under which people band together. However, **Aegis** has several additional themes and moods that describe its own unique place in the setting.

Epic Adventure. This is a game about big, sweeping actions and over-the-top stories. Monsters are real and roam the world. Some are strange creatures, others are human. The characters face these things head on, using their wits, strength, and daring to forge stories that will echo through the ages. What impossible tasks will you undertake? What heroic accomplishments will the poets write about? Who will be at your side in battle, and what legendary enemies will stand against you? What natural phenomena or purviews do you associate with, and how will your powers embody them?

Exploration and Discovery; Curiosity and Wonder. The world is huge, and much of it is uncharted. Characters who set sail run the risk of being blown off course in a storm and washing up on an island where a sorceress makes her home. That old cave no one ever ventures too far into holds a monster's lair or the door to an Underworld. The cautious and the fearful stay far away; a Champion checks her map, lights her torch, and ventures within. She wants to know: What's at the center of the labyrinth? Can you reason with Medusa? What's the view like from atop Olympus?

Divinity vs. Mortality. What does it mean to be a god, or wield godlike powers? Lots of myths depict deities grappling with the same problems mortals face, only on a world-shaking scale. **Trinity Continuum: Aberrant** asks "What would you do with the power of a god?" **Aegis** poses that question as well. Where does the line between human and god meet? What are the benefits to godliness? What do you do when all you want is get home to your loved ones, but the gods (or fate, or the simple fact that you're Just That Good) keep piling adventure after adventure on your plate?

High Emotion. Part of what makes these epic stories so compelling even millennia later is how passionate the characters are about their closest companions and the causes they pledge their swords and their lives to. Friendships, romances, betrayals, every feeling hits on a grander scale. Not only is Odysseus determined to get home to Penelope, but Penelope's faith in him also never wavers. So great was Achilles' rage when Hector killed his beloved Patroclus, the gods themselves had to intervene. These are the people and causes you'd walk into Hades' realm for, or set sail to avenge.

Recognizing Your Potential. There's no one single path to becoming a hero. You might be a person from a small village whose life changed in an instant, a soldier who's spent her life honing her skills, or a prince waiting for the day a prophecy finally comes to pass. So, what makes a hero, exactly? Is it strength, cleverness, the determination to do the right thing when the odds are against you? What are you capable of when you're sure you've given it all you've got but the world asks for more? What heights can you reach, that you didn't know were within your grasp? Aegis encourages players to explore the answers.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book also requires you to have a copy of **the Trinity Continuum Core,** which contains rules for how to roll and interact with other Storypath systems, plus more Gifts, Edges, and Skill Tricks your characters can use in this game.

CHAPTERS

Chapter One: The World of Aegis summarizes the world as it stood at the time of the starfall and what's happened in the years since. It also introduces some of the strange places throughout the ancient world affected by ambrosia and other events, and some of the notable characters that can be found in those locations.

Chapter Two: Colleges presents the Colleges and counter-societies active in the world today that the characters might join or interact with, and the antagonists who provide challenges along the way.

Chapter Three: Inspired Characters introduces Champions, Oracles, and Olympians, the new types of Inspired characters available to play in Aegis. It discusses what makes each type of character unique, and delves into the themes their powers fall under.

Chapter Four: Character Creation walks players through creating characters for this game, and offers advice for adapting modern era Skills from the Trinity Continuum Core for this period. Additionally, it provides new Paths, Edges, and Skill Tricks for players to use.

Chapter Five: New Rules presents the ways characters interact with Dramatic Editing and Super Science in this era and explores the mysteries of ambrosia. It also provides new vehicle and equipment examples.

Chapter Six: Gifts provides rules for the powers Champions, Oracles, and Olympians wield. In addition to presenting new Gifts across all three character types, this chapter introduces Universal Gifts which can be taken by Inspired characters at any level.

Chapter Seven: Storyguiding Aegis discusses the types of stories you can tell in this setting, and includes safety rules to use at your table. It explores

ways you can dial up or down the involvement of gods in your game. Finally, it provides new antagonists for your characters to face.

Appendix: Setting Secrets offers more information about what happened the night the skies lit up over Mount Olympus, and how the starfall affected locations throughout the world. It also provides advice for Storyguides to handle ways in which the characters' actions might affect the timeline.

INSPIRATIONAL MEDIA

The ancient world — especially that of Bronze Age Greece — has captivated imaginations since, well, the Bronze Age. Following are works from antiquity through the modern day we feel can help inspire your chronicle, from giving you an idea for the clothing, architecture, and technology of the period to capturing the tone and emotions of an epic tale.

Assassin's Creed: Odyssey (video game, 2018): This game follows Alexios and Kassandra, the grandchildren of King Leonidas of Sparta during the Peloponnesian War. The game's stunning visuals capture many cities throughout Greece, and features characters from history and mythology, in addition to artifacts far beyond the technology of the time.

Circe, by Madeline Miller: This 2018 novel retells Greek myths from the witch Circe's point of view, most notably the events of The Odyssey. The novel's themes of witchcraft and transformation are good examples of Oracle powers, and centers several women characters who are often vilified in mythic retellings. Miller is also the author of *Song of Achilles,* which tells the legendary warrior's story from the viewpoint of his companion and lover Patroclus.

The Eternals (film, 2021): While the superpowers of the Eternals themselves come from their otherworldly origins, their abilities are good examples of the Inspired abilities in the time of Aegis. Gilgamesh and Phastos exhibit Champion powers; Sersi's and Sprite's powers are similar to Oracles; and Ikaris and Kingo display abilities much like Olympians'. The characters' names and abilities also show how the stories of their deeds turned into myths, much in the way characters in Aegis might also inspire tales of the gods.

Extra Credits (YouTube series): This YouTube channel offers short, entertaining videos covering periods of history, which make a good starting point for research and bite-sized bits of information.

Horizon Zero Dawn (video game, 2017): Set in a post-apocalyptic future, this game follows Aloy, a young woman in search of answers about her origins. It blends low and high tech in interesting ways, and includes other clever nods to antiquity.

The Iliad and *The Odyssey,* by Homer: These two epic poems tell the tale of the Trojan War and Odysseus' 10-year journey home. Featuring mortal heroes and quarreling gods who intervene for their chosen sides, and themes of fate, hubris, love, and loyalty, both tales have been adapted into many mediums, including the 2004 film *Troy* and 2000's *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*

Kaos (television series, 2024): Though it has a modern day setting, this is an excellent examination of the complicated family relationships between the gods, the power a prophecy can hold over its subjects, and the epic quests heroes can undertake.

Oedipus Rex, by Sophocles: Fate is inescapable in this ancient tragedy. At every turn, when a character attempts to thwart an oracle's predictions, their actions only serve to bring about their destiny.

Percy Jackson and the Olympians, by Rick Riordan: This book series follows Percy Jackson, son of Poseidon, as he discovers his godly heritage and finds himself and his friends entangled in the plots of the Olympians. It features monsters out of mythology, oracular predictions, and journeys to the Underworld and other strange places.

ambrosia: The name given to the golden liquid discovered after the starfall and collected in pools throughout the world. Contact with the substance transforms an individual from a baseline human into an Inspired person.

Champion: An Inspired individual capable of great feats of physical prowess and amazing luck.

chapter house: A location maintained by a *College,* where members can meet, seek shelter, and study ambrosia and its effects.

College: A society formed of like-minded individuals, dedicated to pursuits such as exploration, innovation, collecting knowledge, and protecting baseline humans from monsters and monstrous individuals transformed by ambrosia.

Gift: Special abilities that Inspired individuals manifest are called Gifts. These may be powers of extraordinary luck, divination, transformation, control over one's environment, physical prowess, and so on.

Inspiration: The ability a person displays to harness probability and change her circumstances. Individuals able to exert control over these energies are called Inspired. Inspiration is also a spendable resource, used to activate Gifts and other abilities.

Olympian: An Inspired individual who has undergone great transformation due to exposure to ambrosia. Olympians often manifest godlike powers, which gives them their name.

Oracle: An Inspired individual who uses ambrosia, rituals, and other reagents to effect change upon the world around them. Oracles are often skilled at divination, and considered witches, sorceresses, and priests.

Strange Place: Locations throughout the world that shouldn't logically exist, whether they exist in physically impossible places or exhibits strange traits. Often they contain large pools of ambrosia, or other intriguing materials.

CHAPTER ONE

THE WORLD OF AEGIS

Then welcome fate! 'Tis true I perish, yet I perish great: yet in a mighty deed I shall expire, let future ages hear it, and admire!
Homer, the Iliad

Before the heavens cracked open like Nyx's golden egg and birthed fiery chaos across a blackened sky; before ambrosia ever touched mortal lips, a different fire burned within Achaean hearts. To describe what is, we first must give breath to what was. To tell of the beginning, we needn't go back to the abyss, nor the origin of humanity, where Prometheus shaped the first child out of clay and Athena breathed life into their lungs. I speak of the passage of the seasons after all the ills of this world sprung forth from Pandora's Box in the glorious dawn of the Age of Heroes.

WHAT CAME BEFORE

During the Bronze Age, which spanned from approximately 1752 to 1050 BCE, the ancient world's civilizations were at the pinnacle of their existence. Trade flourished, bringing food and material goods from distant lands. Artisans crafted works that would last millennia; wheel-made pottery records images of daily life and heroic deeds. The invention of writing systems allowed philosophers, scholars, and scientists to recorded observations that formed the foundations for thinkers who followed after. Bards composed epic dramas; their sentiments still stir hearts today. The invention of the wheel, the durable strength of the bronze plow, and a new technique called irrigation made farming easier.

This is the era during which historians estimate the Trojan War took place, around 1184 BCE. Many of the Greek myths students learn today occur against a Bronze Age backdrop. During this time, Jason recruited his Argonauts to find the Golden Fleece, and Odysseus began his long journey home to Ithaca.

This world — more than 3000 years before the Hammersmith Event — was theoretically devoid of Inspired individuals. However, the surviving stories, if allowed a grain of truth, suggest otherwise. Perhaps a smattering of powered individuals throughout the world sparked stories of heroes, monsters, witches, and even gods, but they were few and far between. A meteor strike in Lycia created the fire-breathing Chimera, which the champion Bellerophon killed; an impact in China may have caused both its Great Flood and created the strange, ever-expanding soil called Xirang its leaders used to combat the rising waters. However, it wasn't until after the Bronze Age collapse was well underway that a star came screaming across the sky and crashed into Mount Olympus, calling forth a new age of heroes. People who came into contact with the impact site, or with debris that fell in the object's wake, gained powers that granted them physical prowess, prophetic abilities, and control over the natural world.

Even as Greece fades into its Dark Age, glimmers of hope exist. Over the last decade, societies called Colleges have sprung up, dedicated to studying the strange materials that fell from the sky. They fight the monsters that arose in its wake, and stave off the decline a little longer. Some of these Inspired individuals seek only to protect their homes and loved ones, while others — who wield powers once thought only for the gods — now claim divinity for themselves.

ON THE BRINK OF COLLAPSE

By hammer and flame, humanity had learned to draw metal from stone, working it into tools... and weapons. Armed with sturdy bronze swords, spears, and shields and eager to test their limits, humankind pitted their strength and wits against their neighbors. In the blink of a cyclops' eye, kingdoms rose and fell.

The Minoan empire expanded from the island of Crete across the Aegean, sharing its rich architecture, artwork, and written language with the people of the mainland. Potters decorated vases with images of bulls and sprawling octopuses, or recreated images of landscapes and battles from elaborate frescoes. Metalworkers created vessels from precious metals, working intricate details into cups, basins, lamps, and more. Jewelers crafted diadems, necklaces, and

bracelets from hammered gold and imported stones, and were masters of the difficult process of granulation. Minoan trade routes spread their culture further to the Old Kingdom of Egypt and east to Anatolia and Asia Minor, bringing them saffron dyes, ceramics, and precious metals. Paved roads, their stones shaped with bronze saws, connected Minoan cities. King Minos' palace at Knossos was the apex of Minoan innovation, where its lavishly detailed frescoes spanned across four stories in height. It boasted elaborate plumbing systems and a subterranean labyrinth.

On Greece's mainland, Mycenae's influence reached north past Iolcus and south to Knossos. While the exact factors in the Minoans' downfall is unknown, an era of earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and invasions made the sun set on the Minoan empire and rise on the Mycenaean. Mycenaeans blended the Minoans' culture, goddess worship, art, and economic and bureaucratically backed monarchy into their own. As wars expanded their empire, Mycenaeans documented their victories and cataloged their ships' numbers and exploits upon stone fortress walls.

The Mycenaeans were more warlike than their Minoan predecessors. Armed with chariots and bronze spears, the Mycenaean army enslaved those they conquered and forced them to toil on their homelands' blood-soaked battlefields. Slaves and other laborers stacked stone upon stone, building magnificent palaces and surrounding the cities with impenetrable walls. In their hubris, the Mycenaean kings, called *wanax,* discounted the threat of invasion from the nearby Dorian peoples.

To be within the boundaries of the palace meant safety. A wanax's domain extended as far as they could see, raising palaces towards the clouds. Wanax protected their domains, using mountains as natural obstacles, building sturdy stone walls around their palatial compounds, and fortifying palace walls. Kingdoms raised large armies and strengthened them with armor and weapons to repel invasions from the Sea Peoples and rival kingdoms. Honest folk worried about bandits and famine more than invaders, which were the providence of the wanax.

Life was not all war. With successful diplomacy, trade flourished between cities and nations. Scribes kept records on stone and papyrus, not only recounting their leaders' accomplishments, but also documenting the flow of goods in and out of the city. Administrators organized the distribution of food and goods to citizens, keeping track of harvests and flocks throughout their domains. Large-scale infrastructure projects abounded, including the construction of harbors, roads, and drainage systems.

Large palace frescoes depicted warriors and the battles they fought, boar hunts, and nature scenes depicting lions and griffins. Mycenaeans exported pottery painted with elaborate geometric patterns in exchange for gold, ivory, copper, and glass. Terracotta figurines served as both religious items and children's toys. As a kingdom dependent on the sea for trade and food, artists religiously depicted the Aegean and sea creatures in their creations.

Where stone walls, bronze blades, and sturdy shields failed, people looked to the gods to save them from harm. Worshipers visited monumental, ornate temples to ask for protection and blessings of prosperity from the gods. Works of art in and of themselves, the temples featured multiple chambers adorned with lavish frescoes and statues of the deities. Many cities venerated one god over all the others as their patron. For example, Kórinthos

AGE OF WHAT?

The Mycenaean period is the historical backdrop of Greek mythology, which is also called the Heroic Age. During this period, Heracles performed his labors and Daedalus and Icarus took their ill-fated flight. Aegis is set in the era after the Bronze Age collapse, in the Greek Dark Ages. The Trojan War and the events of ***The Odyssey*** and ***The Aeneid*** occurred at the beginning of this period. Little to no documentation exists to fully explain what triggered the destruction of Mycenaean society or why the population declined. Storyguides could run campaigns exploring the ruins of the fallen empire or draw inspiration from mythology.

Storyguides who want to run campaigns mirroring those myths of the Heroic Age can shift the timeline of those epic events to after the crash on Mount Olympus. Don't feel trapped into following the mythological or historical timelines if your players want to portray Inspired characters alongside Jason or Odysseus. After all, these stories passed through oral traditions over the centuries, and the "truth" is never as important as the story you want to tell.

chose Poseidon, god of the oceans, due to their dependence on calm waters for their livelihoods. In contrast, Thíva honored Zeus, king of the gods and god of lightning, which sparked internal conflict with the cult of Dionysus — god of wine, fertility, and revelry — that was active in the city. Outside the temples, people maintained small household altars to show reverence to their personal gods. The temple's clergy and oracles guided the faithful in prayer and facilitated rituals and sacrificial offerings.

Priests and priestesses held great influence over the wanax, advising on matters both spiritual and political and interpreting the gods' will. The gods could be fickle and hard to appease, harshly punishing a kingdom for its ruler's transgressions. Not even the wanax was spared a god's wrath; they were often required to offer their children as sacrifice when circumstances were at their most dire. Though it likely gave little comfort to a grieving monarch, divine cruelty wasn't limited to mere mortals; the gods subjected their own children to grueling trials and cruel fates. Priests pointed to Heracles' labors as a clear example of the callousness of those who dwelt atop Mount Olympus.

FIRES OF WAR

The first hints of the Mycenaean age's sunset coincided with the events leading to Troy's fall. At the wedding of Peleus and Thetis, Theseus, a spurned suitor of Helen of Spárti, maneuvered young Paris of Troy to destroy Helen's happiness by separating her from her new husband, King Menelaus. Peleus's guests claim it was the goddess of discord, Eris, who planted the seeds of war that bore fruit in the years that followed, though other attendees attribute the ensuing strife to warmongering politicians, eager to seize power for themselves.

Conspirators claimed that Paris had a golden apple to give to the fairest goddess at the wedding. Each goddess promised Paris a boon. Only the promise of the goddess of love, Aphrodite, moved Paris to choose. For pronouncing Aphrodite the fairest, Aphrodite gave Helen to Paris. Emboldened, Paris visited King Menelaus with his family's delegation under the guise of paying respects to the royal couple. Paris stole Helen away and fled across the sea to Troy.

King Menelaus called his allies to war with Troy when diplomatic means to recover his wife failed. The two kingdoms fought in the names of their patron gods, pitting their cunning against one another through their champions. The Achaeans claimed the support of Athena, goddess of warfare and wisdom, while the Trojans considered themselves blessed by Ares, god of war, bloodlust, and courage. Unbeknownst to Paris, the bewitchment that held Helen in Paris's sway and restrained her tactician's mind broke, and she corresponded with her brother-in-law King Agamemnon, asking his help to return home. After nine bitter years of war, Troy fell after Helen helped the Achaean forces — hidden within their massive wooden horse — gain entry into the city. Becalmed waters and perils at sea delayed the Achaean fleets' journey home, though many sailors believed the gods were punishing them for destroying their temples. Of the lost ships, Odysseus' infamous voyage home to Ithaca took ten years.

After the Achaeans returned home, they enjoyed two summers of peace. A drought scorched the farmlands in the third summer and thinned food stores into bitter winter. Oracles said that Demeter, the goddess of the harvest, withdrew her blessings from the lands with the disappearance of her daughter Kore. No amount of prayers or sacrifices returned fertile bounties to the fields. Failed

HELEN OF SPARTI

The face that launched 1,000 ships is the alleged daughter of Zeus and the Aetolian princess Leda of Spárti. Already a clever strategist and deft political thinker, Helen trained with her brothers in the Spartan tradition of war and was the pride of her father, King Tyndareus. Her keen mind and extraordinary beauty attracted the attention of many suitors throughout her youth.

Helen lived out her remaining years as the queen of Spárti and passed through the veil between realms. When the sky chariot fell and birthed monsters, Helen returned from the Underworld. She ate ambrosia and donned a mask, pledging her life to train the next generation of heroes to protect Greece.

harvests and strained trade between the kingdoms heightened the growing scarcity, and the public's temper ignited. The wealthy elite within the cities hoarded what precious little remained. As the voices of the lower classes rose in alarm, rebellion caught like the wildfires that ravaged the fields. Enslaved Dorian people conspired with their free cousins to raze Mycenaean cities to the ground. Disgruntled and hungry soldiers joined the rebellion, opening the city gates and allowing the invading armies to sweep south to Knossos.

The Sea Peoples seized the advantage, pressing south and attacking the weakened seaward cities along the Aegean. Their fleet-footed fighters' presented a formidable challenge to charioteers armed with long spears. The Sea Peoples advanced into Egypt until Pharaoh Ramesses III and his forces repelled them at the Battle of Djahy and again on the Nile River. To the north Aegean, Thracians conquered the Hittite state, pressing eastward into Assyria.

Rising from the Ashes

When the ruined embers of the once-great cities cooled, years of war combined with famine and disease took an additional toll, thinning the population. It was too late when the oracles claimed that Demeter's grief had calmed, and she reunited with her daughter. Athenian oracles claimed their city was spared a large part of the destruction that ravaged the rest of Greece, thanks to the continued favor of their patron goddess.

The Sea Peoples

The historical record of the identities of the Sea Peoples doesn't identify who exactly they were or where they originated. Their weapons, clothing, and manner of fighting were a mix of all the cultures within the Aegean region. Their fearsome prowess for war was so great that it was documented for over 100 years by pharaohs Ramesses II, Merneptah, and Ramesses III.

To use them in a campaign, use their legend of piracy in the Aegean as an inspiration for Storyguide characters. Player characters might defend a city against their attacks, or seek a hidden Sea Peoples stronghold filled with plundered treasures.

Once safe trade routes fell into disrepair and became the domains of bandits. Peaceful agreements between nations crumbled when scarcity and uncertainty reigned. The great ships burned in their harbors. Without large vessels and trade, the need to keep written records faded, and written languages were lost. The techniques for smelting bronze were forgotten as material supplies dwindled and forges were destroyed. Dorians from the kingdoms of Asia Minor introduced new innovations for smelting and forging iron. Iron-forged tools made working in the fields and harvesting cereals easier.

People migrated and established smaller townships in the Ionian tribal model of phratriai — brotherhoods — abandoning the rigid hierarchical structures of monarchy for the consensus of respected elders and a mayor, called the basileus. Though kings were mostly gone, societal hierarchies remained, placing the basileus, affluent landowners, and warriors at the top and the landless day laborers called thetes below enslaved people. The basileus protected the memory of their cities, creating and preserving the ancient traditions and rules for social conduct. on the circumstances of a person's birth, their family's wealth, and their individual military prowess dictated their social status within their gene (clan). The gene's members maintained relationships through arranged marriages, the practice of guest-friendship relationship called xenia, and the ritual exchange of gifts to share goodwill.

Travelers mostly walked between townships, while successful merchants transported their goods in small ox- or donkey-drawn carts. Horses were a rare luxury that few could afford for travel or hunting. Messengers and travelers brought news of happenings from afar, making a new face in town welcome. Most villagers never ventured more than a few miles from the safety of their homes, leaving the dangerous journey between cities to merchants and adventurers. The laws of hospitality dictated that hosts offer food, water, and protection to those who sought shelter. Under these rules, guests were honor bound to bring no harm to their hosts or damage to the household.

In the villages, the oikos, or household, consisted of extended families. Each township was different, but all valued bravery, skill, self-control, loyalty, and respect. Residents took pride in honoring the gods and the promises one made. They showed pity for beggars, respect for others and the elderly, and

followed rules of hospitality. Violating these ethics placed the transgressor before the basileus.

Elders held boule (council) in the agora to hear disputes between citizens and render judgment. Free peasants, called demos, attended these hearings and communicated their approval via applause and disapproval with silence, for commoners weren't allowed to speak in the assembly. Offenders who committed crimes could compensate those they wronged with goods or services before the boule administered harsher punishment. Only the most severe crimes were punished with banishment or death.

Throughout Greece, the sprawling palaces and fortified cities of the previous age had been destroyed or fell into disrepair. Villagers constructed new homes with stacked stones and wood, no longer reliant on feats of Bronze Age engineering. Builders focused on creating sturdy structures, prioritizing function and durability over the stylistic adornments of the past. People ate simple diets featuring cabbages, chickpeas, olives, garlic, figs, honey, porridge, eggs, bread, and wine. Communities reared goats, sheep, cows, swine and chickens, while hunters sought wild game, and fishing villages depended on the bounty of the sea. Villagers used animal parts such as entrails, livers, or feet in divination and other religious practices. Worshipers ritualistically burned sacrificed animals on altars.

Potters sat at their wheels just as their predecessors had, creating vessels to store water, wine, and olive oil for cooking and fuel. However, the years of war, plague, and famine had killed many artisans of the previous age, and their more sophisticated processes and techniques were lost. Gone were the intricate paintings of battles and landscapes, largely replaced with geometric designs. When wars, revolts, and invasions destroyed mighty cities, the elaborate frescoes and stone carvings that adorned them crumbled just like the fortified walls, until only fragments remained.

Weavers spun wool and flax for clothing. Unlike the Mycenaeans and Minoans, Dark Age Greek fashion favored clothing covering most of their bodies. They wore sturdy himation (cloaks), chiton (a rectangular piece of fabric secured at the shoulders and tied with a belt at the waist as a tunic), and peplos (a square piece of cloth worn over the chiton) instead of the chest-baring flounced skirts and kilts Minoans favored. Sandals and slippers adorned the feet while poorer laborers walked barefoot. Jewelry made of shells, reeds, precious gems, and precious metals were popular, if uncommon among the lower classes. Gold or iron fibulae held chiton and peplos in place over loincloths. Families passed their jewelry down to newer generations, or made offerings to the gods with precious pieces. The most opulent indulgence of the Dark Age outside of adorning oneself in jewelry was dyeing clothing.

Our grandparents took the lessons from their hardships to heart and unified our communities in a way that protects us from harm and promotes mutual respect and assistance. We're no longer fighting in wanax' battles. We're still warriors, even if we're not wielding a sword every day — instead we fight alongside each other for our families' survival.

HERO CULTS

Without the safety of sturdy stone walls and well-armed soldiers to defend them, today's villagers look to their warriors for protection. Veterans of the old wars train the next generation, regaling them with tales of slaying the Hydra and wrestling divine bulls. Monsters roam the land, murderous water spirits haunt the waterways, and bandits stalk the ruins of fallen kingdoms and the sprawling roads between. Worst yet are the creatures lying in wait within the depths of the old temples, hungry mouths salivating for the flesh of those who dare steal earthly treasures from the gods. Rumors speak of the restless battlefield dead, their bones picked clean by carrion birds, wandering far from Underworld shores.

Adventurers seek hidden treasures in forbidden tombs or test their mettle against fantastic beasts. Some die on their quests; the lucky return wealthy and victorious, and are lauded as heroes. Others hew closer to home — they respond to calls to arms and fend off raiders, rescue villagers, recover stolen goods, or cure devastating illnesses. Bards and priests lift songs of their deeds to the peaks of Olympus. A hero's wisdom and strength guides the village; such an adventurer often becomes the basileus. People show their respect through offerings, and when trouble arises, visit them to gain the hero's assistance. Often, youths come seeking seasoned warriors to train them, intent on becoming the next generation's great heroes.

When venerated heroes succumb to the perils of age or injury, their followers enshrine their remains within elaborate shaft tombs decorated with treasures and offerings of wine and oil for the afterlife in the Elysian Fields. In many places, worshipers edify heroes alongside the gods. Visitors

leave small tokens at their tombs, be it a seashell with significant emotional importance or a piece of jewelry they crafted. Enshrined in the crypt at Lefkandi, the great healer Maia and her apprentice Lycus lie draped in gold and sealed away with a talisman of Chiron for protecting the seaside village from a kraken.

With the decimation of the old ways, the once-great temples of the gods fell into disrepair. Far fewer pilgrims dare journey the great distances required. Others have lost faith, refusing to pay homage to deities that allowed the world to fall into darkness. Communities administer religion within households around hestia (hearth) instead of being left in the hands of priestesses and priests in distant temples. Without the stringent oversight of formal religion, no two congregations lift their voices to the gods in the same way. Worshipers offer sacrifices upon smaller altars and pray for blessings and mercy. Some claim worshiping heroes is honoring the gods, for many believe they are the gods' children. Some cities have even adopted such figures as their patrons: Sparti venerates Heracles, the legendary son of Zeus, seeking his blessing and training their warriors in his honor.

Hero cults rise across the land, with tales of heroes like Heracles spreading as far as Gaul. Some elders whisper that such things are blasphemy and condemn the practice. Even if the gods are less present, they warn, why risk the wrath of those like The Unseen One or Despoina by worshiping accomplished mortals? If the gods won't save us, and salvation is just outside the limits of our abilities, who else can we turn to but heroes?

THE WIDER WORLD

Ripples of the Bronze Age collapse spread far beyond the Aegean Sea. As trade routes fell into disrepair or became bandits' domains, essential supplies — including food, textiles, and precious tin and copper — stopped arriving. Civilizations that depended on them crumbled or found themselves vulnerable to neighboring kingdoms hungry for expansion, or raiders looking to take what little they had left.

AEGYPTUS

The fathers of our grandfathers traded with the lands beyond the Aegean and reached as far south as the Aegyptus — or Tawy, the Two Lands, as it was called by the Kmt — with its sweeping deserts, fertile oases, and tall stone monuments.

The Kmt (People of the Nile) were brilliant stonemasons whose creations used massive stone blocks taller than any man — some bigger than any warship. The precise way the Kmt stacked and moved giant bricks using levers, ropes, and logs spoke to their ingenuity and planning in a way that few other societies could replicate. With this knowledge the Kmt built brilliant white limestone pyramids. They reached skyward like mountains rising from the scorching sands on the western bank of the Nile River. Pharaohs ordered them built as tombs and lasting testaments to their greatness, while scientists relied upon their position against the sky to record the stars' movements. These massive monuments were reminders that one's accomplishments in life were worth celebrating and remembering for eternity beyond the moment when all stories die.

In the shadows of the pyramids lay massive graveyard complexes filled with a fraction of the wealth of Kmt royalty: gold, wine, horses, and even food was buried with kings and queens to secure their comfort in the afterlife. These sites were sacred, but the treasures hidden beneath the sand taunted tomb robbers. Only the bravest dared test the temple guardians' mettle and attempt to thwart the clever traps the tomb builders left behind. Nor did many wish to risk the curses of the gods, whose dire warnings were spelled out for the ages in hieroglyphs and paintings on the walls.

The Kmt were fascinated with what waits in death, but there was life beyond the tomb. Villages flourished in the fertile Nile River valleys and around oases. The pharaoh and his family lived in luxury at the top of society with their viziers below them, and farmers, laborers, and enslaved people at the bottom of the hierarchy. Outside those condemned to slavery, the Kmt believed the gods preordained people's stations in life. Their respective gods chose everyone from farmer, scribe, or pharaoh to fulfill a calling. The priestesses of Sekret, goddess of protection, trained as doctors. Women from other kingdoms made pilgrimages to Aegyptus to learn from Sekret's followers when their own nations barred them from obtaining such knowledge.

Kmt upper-class women wore form-fitting cotton dresses covering them from shoulder to ankle, while lower-class women wore only linen kilts. Men wore sheer blouses and skirts. All Kmt covered themselves with a shawl in rainy weather and emulated the gods by walking barefoot. People of all gender expressions

A WORD ON SLAVERY

Slavery in ancient times was a harsh reality. Be they criminals, debtors, or captives from a military campaign, enslaved people endured cruelty and a quality of life below that of free people in most nations. People were kidnapped, traded, and sold, separated from their families and homes. The practice is unacceptable no matter how "good" a person participating in it may seem. It's not romantic to own or be a slave.

Only include slavery in your Aegis campaigns after a sincere conversation with everyone at the table. Be cognizant of treating this sensitive topic with respect. Escaping from slavery or overthrowing slavers are powerful stories, but if your table has lines and veils against slavery, leave them out. For more information on how to handle sensitive topics at your table with care, see the Storyguiding advice in chapter 7.

wore wigs and make-up, and outlined their eyes with kohl to reduce the sun's glare. The Kmt shaved their heads to stave off the risk of lice and bathed frequently, favoring cleanliness as one of their social values.

Life beneath the punishing sun was harsh, but the Kmt believed in living the best and happiest lives possible. They sought to achieve ma'at — harmony and balance — by working as hard as they played. Their children learned the value of respect and kindness.

The Kmt believed the paradise in their afterlife was a continuation of their life. When Kmt died, they passed through the Hall of Judgment to have their hearts weighed before Osiris. They'd be allowed into the afterlife if they lived a life of honesty, kindness, balance, and gratitude towards the gods. All that the Kmt left behind in death returned to them for eternity. They worshiped their many gods with prayer, joyful dance, and sacrifice. All gods in the Kmt pantheon were honored for the different domains they controlled, but each individual revered one god over others in their personal life. A Kmt needed to receive proper burial rites to pass from this life to the next. Failure to give the deceased a proper burial ensured that the dead would haunt their surviving family members.

With the fall of the Bronze Age, old trade treaties fell to the wayside. Within the crypts of ancient wanax lay golden idols, glazed scarabs, and other treasures originating from Aegyptus. Enterprising and courageous merchants, eager to re-establish trade with the Kmt, seek heroes to help them in their endeavors. They offer promises of wealth beyond imagining. All one needs to do is build a ship, sail through the Aegean, fend off monsters, and dodge pirates.

ALBION

Far to the north and west lies the isle of Albion. Early Achaean explorers returned with tales of its white cliffs and described it as a land where giants ruled. Its many rivers teem with fish, and good hunting and fertile ground await those who make the journey. Some historians tie the giants directly back to Achaea, naming them as the descendants of thirty rebellious princesses who were banished from home and forced to set sail after conspiring to murder their husbands. The eldest daughter, Albina, was first to step foot on the island, and named it after herself.

Other tales brought more recent heroes to Albion's shores. To atone for the grave sin of murdering his family, Heracles sought guidance from the Oracle of Delphi. The Oracle ordered Heracles to serve the Mycenaean wanax, Eurystheus, for ten years under the condition that Heracles must perform any tasks Eurystheus gave him. Thus emboldened, the wanax assigned ten impossible tasks in hopes that the hero would be killed and his death would appease Hera. During the tenth labor in his final year of service, Heracles sailed within the golden bowl of Helios to the distant land of Iberia to capture the cattle of the three-headed, six-armed, and six-legged Geryon. Heracles felled the Geryon with an arrow dipped in the hydra's venomous blood, knocking the conjoined being unconscious. When Geryon's enchanted blood spilled onto the ground, it birthed an accursed red blossom.

With Geryon wounded, Heracles gathered the cattle and drove them through the land back towards Mycenae. The oracles claim that Hera was discontent with allowing Heracles to complete his labor without further complication and sent

GERYON'S LILY

The three-bodied grandchild of Medusa, Geryon was born with three heads, six arms, and six legs. Geryon's life was difficult and often lonely. Blessed and cursed with longevity and regeneration, they survived when Heracles's poisoned arrow pierced their forehead. The deadly hydra venom mixed with Geryon's enchanted blood brought forth a deep red lily with long thin petals. Those that dare to drink the lily's nectar are cured of all injury but slowly turn to stone until the next full moon rises.

Those seeking the lilies risk the curse of Medusa's blood to harvest its nectar. After what happened with Heracles, who would dare to steal from Geryon's lonely pastures again?

a swarm of gadflies to bite the beasts. The cattle scattered to the lands to the north, crossing the sea to the island of Albion. Heracles chased the cattle and discovered the land of giants, where massive stone structures jutted from the earth. There accepted the hospitality of Bretannus, whose daughter Celtine hid the cattle, refusing to return them until Heracles helped overthrow the giant tyrant king Albion. With no other recourse, and eager to return the cattle to the awaiting Eurystheus, Heracles accepted the task. After the giant's defeat, Celtine seduced Heracles and returned the cattle. Heracles was long gone by the time their son, Celtus, was born.

Heracles returned to Mycenae, speaking of the island's giants, the monolithic stone slabs arranged in circles, and the brave warriors he fought alongside in Albion. In the age since, the roaming tribes have settled into circular, walled cities atop hills. Gone is the male descendant kingship, now replaced by a matrilineal succession of kings starting from the union of Celtine and Heracles. These people, now called the Picts, are polytheistic farmers whose kingdoms reach as far east as Gaul's walled fortresses.

As the Picts settled into an agricultural community, they tended sheep, cattle, and pigs while hunting wild animals and fishing. They grow cereal crops such as barley, wheat, rye, and vegetables such as kale, turnips, beans, leeks, onions, and skirret. They create textiles from wool and flax, and adorn their bodies with colorful tattoos. Pict stone and lumber homes are round windowless, with central hearths and earthen roofs.

Do not underestimate the Picts for their pastoral lifestyle. They're a warrior culture not unlike our own. Their boldness earned them the honor of fighting alongside Heracles in battle. Dragon's fire burns in their blood, so much so that Pict pirates ambush daring farmers and traders along their coasts.

Brilliant engineers and stonemasons innovated new techniques for milling grain with waterwheels, dried barley, and wheat kernels in kilns. Their intricately carved circular designs on large stone slabs and meticulously detailed jewelry reflect their skills as artisans. Even their burial chambers are vast round crypts buried beneath the earth and accessible from rounded doorways on the surface. Picts believe the crypts and caverns are places where the veil between life and death was thin. If one wants to meet the People of the Mound — whom the Picts don't dare call by name — one only needs to descend through a cave to reach the Underworld. The Picts believe invoking the People of the Mound brings their piercing gaze upon them. If the People of the Mound deem a person worthy, they may visit their world and return unharmed, wealthy beyond imagination. If not, that person fades from memory, lost to the winds of change.

The Picts arrange massive stone circles to chart the heavens' passing and invoke nature's divine spirits to animist worshipers. Pict gods are representations of nature, called upon by name only when necessary. For example, a hunter calls upon the Huntsman to offer a boon in exchange for the god's blessing.

OCEANIA

In the Southeastern Lands, Austronesians built long boats from tree trunks and followed ocean currents eastward. Driven by the desire to explore, seafarers took food, water, and livestock for the long journey. They charted their way across the ocean, checking their progress east from the position of the stars and the temperature of the currents. Each new land they discovered, they rested, explored, and settled for a time. They needed no temples to worship

the divine. They were one with the wind, land, and sea — and with the gods.

Mystics read the weather and predicted the future. As a tribe, people danced and sang in the ebbing tide, raising their voices to the vast skies. When their children grew old, and their grandchildren had children of their own, the next generation left their island seeking out another, compelled by a sense of curiosity and adventure. Their gods blessed them with success as they followed the path of a great sea creature. Their families proliferated across Oceania until one day, they stopped.

The voyagers enjoyed the safety and prosperity of their island homes, building up their tribes and cultivating the plants, such as coconuts and taro, they brought with them on fertile volcanic soil. With the time to establish alliances and enemies, the tribes warred with one another, using spears and knives fashioned from bone and wood. They kept no written records; instead, they ritualistically tattooed their bodies with geometric symbols detailing their lineage and victories. Tattooers tapped the designs into the skin using bone needles coated with ink made from the soot of a kukui tree nut. Their greatest heroes were covered head to toe in tattoos and entered their legends reborn as gods.

After several ages of traveling, the Austronesians lost their way back to their original homeland. Whether the sea swallowed it or some tectonic upheaval diverted the current, the land from whence they came receded into the fog of time. Their oracles whispered of a future where the tide would bring a stranger to their shores cast out of time from a falling star.

SCANDIA

Our merchants reached the northern shores of a land, Scandia, where the sun disappears for days before its resplendent return. When the sun slips down into the mountains, bitter winters of ice and snow roll across the land, and people huddle together in furs around fires to keep themselves warm. Fierce beasts and vengeful spirits roam the land with the curling of frigid northern winds. No single nation unites the people inhabiting this land. Dense forests and mountains separate tribes. We don't venture past the port cities that trade with us for fear of being swallowed by the wilderness.

The Greeks trade the Scandians metal, pottery, and oils for amber and furs. Despite the distance and frigid waters that separate them, their cultures follow a similar warrior ethos. Weapons forged from imported metals give Scandian warriors a fighting edge over their competitors; their smiths seek to master metallurgy using lost-wax casting techniques. Scandian warriors are renowned for their prowess and use of axes against other clans seeking to claim their lands. Artisans carve stone an created objects from wool and wood. Their people feed themselves through agriculture, hunting, animal husbandry, and fishing. They dress in leather, wool, and fur to stave off the cold, though the temperatures in spring and summer are milder.

Scandians keep their religious beliefs a veiled secret from outsiders. They worship the sun and pray to a pair of twin gods. Bodies of water are places of mystery and spiritual significance. They bury their dead beneath large mounds. Chilling sounds emanate from these crypts in midwinter; some claim that answering the call will reward those that respond with treasure. None who set out on such journeys return unscathed — if they return at all. Terrifying creatures stalk the land, making dangerous to venture into the perpetual night.

SHANG

Before the world gives way to unceasing ocean to the east, the kingdom of Shang is nestled in the Yellow River's fertile valley. Traveling to the end of the earth from Achaean lands requires an arduous overland journey, crossing great mountains

VIKINGS

Vikings don't exist in this period of history. They don't truly appear until much later, in AD 793. There's a lot of information about this era of Scandinavian history we just don't know. People of this time constructed ships and traded with other nations in the south, so it's not too far of a stretch to make a skilled sailor and pirate character. Tables introducing characters from this Northern warrior culture that favor exploration and piracy with the mix of ambrosia could use someone out of sync with the timeline.

Consider the golden rule if someone at the table has their heart set on Vikings. There is no such thing as canon. Don't let actual history hinder the story your table finds fun.

and vast deserts, and contending with the myriad dangers along the way. Explorers claim dragons fly through the heavens in Shang lands, blessing the fields below with rain. The rulers of Shang maintain the kingdom's prosperity through mastery over the waters. Emperor Xie gained renown for assisting Emperor Yu in controlling the Great Flood that destroyed much of the valley for two generations. Xie's bloodline makes no claims to divinity, just a mastery of the elements through well-executed city planning that controls river flow through dams and channels.

The royal court established a rigid structure of bureaucracy to manage all aspects of the kingdom, including officers in charge of agriculture, archers, laborers, artisans, and augury. Court officials regulate religious practices, and dictate the amount of bronze that members of the nobility may own to facilitate the armament of soldiers. People labor outside the court to cultivate rice and millet in the fields. Farmers tend orchards for growing peaches, oranges, apricots, chestnuts, and lychee. Meat sources for food and sacrificial offerings include dogs, sheep, horses, pigs, chickens, and oxen. Dogs provide valuable assistance in hunting and herding livestock. Popular game animals include raccoons, foxes, and boars.

Shang enjoys a prosperous trade with its neighbors, trading rice and salt for western merchants' wheat. Merchants exchange precious silk, jade, and bone items for linen, cotton, and pottery. Ivory is especially valued for its use in sacrifices and as material for art. Finished pieces fetch a handsome price. Western kingdoms highly value salt as a currency for its preservative and curative properties. Wealthy merchants travel outside Shang with oxen-drawn carts along established routes through forest and desert, following the flow of rivers and oases.

Shang doctors are skilled in treating illnesses with herbs and utilize the earthbound divinity of dragons to stave off disease. Dragon bones are essential in treating the most severe fevers and curing poison. The location of divine dragon graveyards is a well-kept secret that doctors pass to their students to keep poachers and thieves from angering the ancestor

FUSANG

People have devoted their lives searching for the island east of China where the sun rises each day. Some claim it is Japan, or another island in the Pacific Ocean, while others claim it's in British Columbia, Sakhalin Island, or even as far south as South America. The significance of a World Tree and the ravens is a motif that reappears in other cultures, such as the Norse Yggdrasil and the tree of similar description (with birds) that appears on murals behind the Great Goddess of Teotihuacan in Pre-Columbian Mexico. A Tree of Life constantly reappears worldwide with interlocking branches that hold the key to knowledge, godhood, and keeping the world alive.

Some argue that the tree of life is symbolism for the fundamental basis of all life on earth — DNA. It's an ancient secret hiding in plain sight among people who didn't understand the science. Or it's a magical tree. Searching for the Tree of Life to save a comrade or seeking to unlock the mysteries of life makes for a great campaign goal.

spirits. A single scale or dragon's tooth is worth twice the seller's weight in salt — f they can survive the dragon's wrath.

Artisans in Shang have perfected a mold metallurgy technique to form detailed gold and bronze objects depicting coiling dragons and other animals. Court managers record methods of refining and mining ores on bone and shell. Artisans craft jewelry, tools, and vessels from jade, bone, ivory, and stone for daily use. Bronze vessels are reserved for ritual purposes to offer sacrifices to the High God Di, the sun and mountains, and the ancestors. After a sacrifice, priests seek answers by cracking ox scapulae or turtle carapaces. The responses are passed through the sounds and recorded as inscriptions on the broken bone or turtle shell.

SHU

In the heart of the Eastern lands, along the banks of the Yazi River, a massive walled city complex enclosed the kingdom of Shu at the Sanxingdui, which means Three Star Mound. Shu's city walls were ten times as tall as any man, with shorter inner walls dividing the different areas of the city. Canals surrounded them and provided irrigation, defense, and flood control. Timber structures rose above the stone into four terraces, leading to the central courtyard with its religious districts at the heart of Shu. Agricultural plots were located on the lowest tier below the industrial and residential neighborhoods. Shu was so large that it enclosed a portion of Mamu River within the sanctity of its boundaries.

Artisans melted and molded stone into sculptures and weapons on the lower tier. Rice paddies, vineyards, and gardens surrounded the entry gates and as the city climbs. Within large enclosures, sericulturists tended to their silkworms to spin the cocoons into precious silks. Along the streets, children played and fetched water from the canal and carried them back into the residential districts. Rich and poor lived within their societal roles; the poor lived on the lower terrace while the wealthy lived closer to the top near the gate that led into the religious district. The Shu's dead rested beneath the earth of each terrace.

Once at the top of Shu, the high temple was the tallest structure, reaching skyward. Bronze heads, twice a person's height and wearing gold leaf masks, decorated the temple's outer pillars. The sculptures resembled no living being in the region, with their huge ears, straight noses, square faces, and mixed animal features, some with dragon or insect-like protruding eyes. The high priests were taller and leaner than the ordinary people of Shu, with an ethereal quality to their graceful movements as they presided over rituals near the life-size statues that bore their likeness.

Large bronze masks on wooden bodies, dressed in priests' robes, lined the temple's corridors alongside animal totems. The effigies with their mouths, eyes, and noses smeared with red powder surrounded the central dais where the temple opens to the sky. Upon the dais, above the sacrificial altar, a life-size tree made of cast bronze held ten bronze ravens nestled on its outstretched branches. The sculpture represented the fusang tree at the world's edge where the sun rises. Each raven waited for its turn to carry the sun across the sky upon its back. A dragon coiled at the tree's roots guarded it from the fires of the sacrificial pit below, where offerings of bronze, gold, jade stone blades, and elephant tusks were ritualistically destroyed and cast into the pit and burned. The people of Shu offered symbols of their wealth and human likenesses for future prosperity. They revered the sun with its unblinking eye that followed them

throughout the temple. When material wealth was not enough, they offered living sacrifices.

Unlike other Eastern kingdoms, the Shu utilized advanced metallurgy, winemaking, and agricultural techniques in its sprawling metropolis. They traded with the domains to the south and even fought alongside the Zhong kingdom against the Shang dynasty.

When the chariot tore across the sky, all word from Shu stopped. Its walls are empty and silent, leaving behind only a handful of large boat-shaped coffins where hundreds of people should be. No bones, human or otherwise, remain. Did their deity answer their prayers? Did the chariot carry them away? Over the past decade, a fog has fallen over the memories of the kingdoms surrounding Sanxingdui. Finding people who remember them and their technological accomplishments is becoming harder. Across the Aegean, distance from Shu has allowed people to remember them. As they move closer, the memory becomes dimmer, like a dream slipping away when you're on the verge of waking.

THE COMING OF AMBROSIA

Almost a decade ago, just before dawn on a warm spring day, the skies over northern Greece lit up bright as day and a roar awakened everyone for hundreds of miles. A line of fire split the skies, and a short while later a terrible explosion shattered the morning quiet as a mysterious object crashed to Earth on the upper slopes of Mount Olympus. While the most common story is that something vast and glowing with golden fire crashed into the side of this huge, sacred mountain, most observers who witnessed this impact report that the golden fireball was visible from more than half an hour before the impact. A few observers thought they saw large fragments flying off the object most now call the sky chariot, and that these fragments were coming off it well before it approached Mount Olympus. Later reports of this day from other locations confirm these observations. The sky chariot was visible from Shu in the far east, to Aegyptus in the south, to Scandia in the north, and the westernmost portions of Asia Minor. A few feared they were witnessing the crash of Helios' chariot that carries the sun across the sky, but the sun's continued presence reassured them that this crash had some other, more mysterious, origin.

In addition to discovering several pools filled with a glowing golden subsance they'd later name *ambrosia*, the first brave heroes who ascended Mount Olympus also found mysterious wreckage, including fragments of some metal they deemed divine in origin. Stronger than the finest bronze or iron, it never tarnishes or rusts, and no forge can melt it. Some of the largest pieces of debris were covered in strange designs and unfamiliar symbols. Most were indecipherable or meaningless, but one large fragment contained an entire word: "LION." This word served to inspire those first explorers. They claimed it as proof the gods had sent this vessel, since lions were grand and terrible predators which only the greatest heroes could slay.

While the pools of ambrosia eventually stabilized into placidly glowing ponds filled with a faintly boiling golden liquid, for the first weeks after the crash of the sky chariot, strangely coherent clouds of gaseous ambrosia filled the air, while some of the liquid ambrosia crawled across the landscape like it was alive. Ambrosia also changed the landscape, turning parts of it glassy or metallic, melding and reshaping fragments of the sky chariot, causing some of it to appear less damaged, while in other pools the liquid rose up in complex, slowly changing shapes. This unusually active ambrosia even caused rocks to transform into smooth polished shapes, mimicking the largest pieces of wreckage.

Even more terrifying were the crudely shaped figures that arose throughout the land. Made from terrifying combinations of metal, organic material, and what looked in some cases like stone, more than a dozen humanoid figures stalked the area around the ambrosia pools, carrying materials or ambrosia-filled vessels from one pool to the next, and performing other incomprehensible tasks. They struck any mortal who attempted to interfere with their efforts, reacting to them more as obstacles than intruders. The figures never acknowledged those who addressed them, and spoke no language, but they cooperated with one another through some unknown nonverbal means.

A few pieces of wreckage still contained potent enchantments, including one piece that disintegrated a man foolish enough to tinker with it. Fortunately, most of the others were far safer, like an ovoid that reduced the weight of any object it was attached to by more than a factor of 20. However, well before

the Society of the Lion took over this location, eager visitors made off with countless scavenged wonders. Since then, warriors, ship captains, rulers, and bandits have all acquired these and other artifacts discovered at the impact site.

No one is certain how many individuals climbed Olympus in these first days, but most who did returned changed. The glowing clouds of ambrosia drifted over the mountain, transforming all who they touched. A few individuals found that some of the liquid ambrosia flowed after them, engulfing the bodies of many people and animals.

Observers who visited Olympus' slopes in these early weeks noticed that the ambrosia almost seemed to have a will of its own. It actively pursued some visitors, determined to engulf them despite their wishes. Others, the ambrosia avoided, and would not touch unless the person deliberately stepped into a pool or walked through a drifting cloud. The affected displayed increased physical abilities, growing stronger or faster, or able to forgo the need for sleep or sustenance. Others gained oracular gifts, and found that they could tug on the strings of fate or call lightning to their hands. Some underwent even more drastic physical changes, their bodies altering in concert with their newfound powers.

Some members of the Society of the Lion believe this active ambrosia sought to deliberately bless or empower individuals, since most of those that it pursued gained significant powers, while a few who it avoided found themselves unchanged when they finally managed to come into contact with it. Some unfortunate souls learned that ambrosia could be a curse as well as a blessing, as their bodies and minds twisted in horrific ways. However, at least on the slopes of Mount Olympus, the ambrosia is now relatively placid, and while some who gained impressive powers claim the ambrosia pool they entered bubbled unusually fiercely when they approached, there is no consensus about whether this phenomenon is real or is merely a product of wishful thinking. Scholars have yet to truly discover a pattern to how the substance bestows power on the Inspired: a person may submerge themselves from head to toe and gain a Champion's abilities, while some Olympians had nothing more than a tepid sip and still acquired godly gifts.

THE COLLEGES

Since the sky chariot's crash, several organizations have formed or adapted in response to the changes ambrosia has wrought and the troubles its presence caused. Nearly all of the groups study ambrosia and the artifacts found in the wreckage, using them to create wonders, seek answers to questions of philosophy or science, or aid in exploring the world. Some groups deem themselves protectors, establishing bases of operations around ambrosia sites throughout the world so the unwitting don't stumble upon a pool of it haphazardly. They stop monsters created from such interactions before they can harm human settlements nearby. Others lend their prowess toward causes they deem righteous — joining armies and acting as advisors to the powerful, or declaring a group of people under their protection.

The Society of the Lion is perhaps the most recognizable of the Colleges, with several chapter houses throughout Greece. Their members often appear when reports of a new ambrosia pool or other evidence of the sky chariot's fall come to light. The Delphic League grew from the already established network of oracles, seers, and priestesses practicing at temples throughout the region. Meanwhile the Nautikoi traveled the seas, making contact with new cultures and seeking tales of other wreckage sites far beyond Grecian shores.

AMBROSIA OR NECTAR?

Knowledge of this mystical substance is relatively widespread, but it has many names. In Greece and on the Ionian Coast of Asia Minor it is often called either ambrosia or nectar. Part of the difference is that the golden substance can come in several forms. It is usually a liquid, but it occasionally appears as a somewhat soft and malleable solid. In Scandia (see below), where ambrosia is in the groundwater, it sometimes percolates to the surface in golden ovoids, that the local people call "golden apples." While even the most widely traveled Nautikoi haven't been to the furthest east and don't know if ambrosia is found there, stories tell of the "peaches of immortality," which some believe to be another name for ambrosia.

The Circle of Heroes banded together to recruit brave souls looking to earn immortality through their valorous deeds. Many other societies formed as well, including those who oppose the larger Colleges and object to their monitoring and control of the ambrosia pools. For more information on these organizations, see Chapter Two.

MOUNT OLYMPUS

Mount Olympus stands in Greece's northern reaches, several days' travel from any cities, in a sparsely populated remote area. On the border between Thessaly and Macedonia, the mountain itself is almost three kilometers tall, with a circumference of 80 kilometers. Its top half is rocky and devoid of trees; ice covers its peak year-round. The Society of the Lion has declared the upper reaches of the mountain, including the ambrosia pools, off-limits to anyone except their members and allies. They regularly station scouts with particularly keen vision to watch for people or animals attempting to climb the mountain and send people to stop any trespassers they find, though the massive amount of area the mountain occupies means that some stealthy parties occasionally slip past. Members of the Delphic League act as guides, steering pilgrims and those seeking a word with the gods to safer paths, away from the protected pools. Today, Mount Olympus is both one of the largest and one of the safer sources of ambrosia in the known world.

More than a few scholars complain about how isolated the mountain is, but its remoteness is also exceedingly useful to the Colleges. Journeying to Olympus requires dedication, resourcefulness, and bravery, especially for those hopefuls traveling from farther afield. Travelers might have to sleep under the open sky or forage for food along the way. Those who seek shelter from people they meet must abide by the rules of hospitality, or possibly be willing to lend aid to the needy before resuming their journey. Bandits stalk the roads and wild animals roam the forests — dangers they may need to face before ever taking a sip of ambrosia. The trek weeds out the faint of heart before the Colleges ever begin their own tests. The mountain's remote location also gives the College's members a chance to dispatch animals transformed into deadly monsterswell before they reach a more densely populated region.

While the mysterious figures that arose in the first days after the sky chariot's crash have been spotted around pools outside of Greece, the ones who appeared on Mount Olympus eventually vanished. A scholar from the Society of the Lion composed a poem after watching one walk into an ambrosia pool and dissolving into it, and several other accounts report similar occurrences. Most of those who study the happenings on Mount Olympus believe the other figures all met the same voluntary end.

THE CHAPTER HOUSES

The upper reaches of the mountain are stark and cold, and even though the ambrosia pools located there are now secure and the risk of living amidst the wonders — and monsters — it can create is greatly diminished, this environment remains notably inhospitable. While Oracles — masters of controlling the weather — climb to the peaks to practice their arts, none have been able to affect a permanent change. Snow soon returns to the peaks, and frigid winds whip up despite the witches' best efforts. However, the mountain's lower slopes are wooded and pleasant, and it's here that the Society of the Lion, the Delphic League, the Nautikoi, and several other allied organizations constructed chapter houses where they welcome new members, watch for intruders, and study the wreckage.

Today, almost a decade after the crash, the societies have built a thriving and prosperous town on the lower slopes of Mount Olympus, which the residents have named Ischyrós, meaning "mighty." Scholars and magicians from the various organization remain in residence, acting as representatives for their Colleges and providing insight into situations as they emerge. Nautikoi explorers and other travelers regularly visit this town to share information about their travels, learn of any recent discoveries, and plan new expeditions. This location is also where travelers who seek access to the pools of ambrosia must go if they wish to avoid open conflict with the Society of the Lion's guardians.

While they started as nothing more than a place to stay when exploring the upper reaches of the mountain, the chapter houses have continued to grow and expand over the years. Today, junior members tend gardens or hunt to provide food. Experienced scholars, led by an Oracle named Eumemes, teach new members about ambrosia and the history of the Colleges' study there. They contribute to the town's small but growing library. In addition, a skilled

HOME OF THE GODS

Before the sky chariot's crash, the name "Mount Olympus" referred to the tallest mountain in a region. Ancient Greece had 19 such locations. If a person living in Arcadia sent a letter to someone in Ionia asking to meet at Mount Olympus, the Arcadian might arrive at Mount Lykaion while their friend would be waiting at Mount Nif. In the aftermath of the crash, the rise of "Olympians" and stories of other Inspired individuals' deeds secured Thessaly's Mount Olympus as the canonical home of the gods.

Reports of what exists at the top differ, even among College members who've journeyed there together. Some travelers find themselves lost in an ever-thickening mist or a raging blizzard, exiting the storm only to find themselves back on the path where they'd begun their ascent. Others claim to have climbed to its highest point, Mytikas Peak, only to find a charred swath where a piece of the sky chariot smashed into the mountain and destroyed what might have been a palace or a throne room. Newer acolytes often dismiss these stories, believing their elders use the peak as a meeting place to decide on portentous matters far away from prying eyes. Still others suggest the gods — or people claiming to be the gods — indeed live there, and caution travelers to approach with reverence.

See Chapter Seven for more advice on how to handle the level of divine presence in your game.

blacksmith named Korinsia established her forge there, along with several of her equally talented apprentices and assistants. They create necessary items from iron, brass, and bronze, not only weapons and armor, but tools and engineering mechanisms as well. They eagerly study and, if possible, repair any artifacts found in the site of the crashed sky chariot, or which travelers have brought from other sites in the known world.

PATROLS AND MONSTERS

Only a few paths suitable for mortals lead to the regions bearing ambrosia pools, which allows the members of the Society of the Lion and allied groups to monitor almost everyone attempting to access them. Their various Gifts allow them to apprehend most trespassers before they can reach a pool. However, many animals, including more than a few large and dangerous species, can easily climb slopes no mortal could hope to scale. As a result, even patrols composed of swift-footed Inspired individuals — and a few who can fly — can still miss or fail to capture the occasional determined creature. Most animals seem to instinctively avoid the ambrosia pools and the other wonders associated with them, but a few seem inextricably drawn to them. Some are sufficiently determined that even their fear of armed and aggressive people will not stop them. A rare few of these animals also seem resistant to Gifts that allow some Inspired to control almost any beast.

Despite the best efforts of the Colleges' members, occasionally beasts transform into horrific and deadly monsters, which the heroes must then slay, tame, or otherwise deal with. Since the chapter houses at the base of the mountain are home to many Inspired, with others visiting regularly, a number of skilled monster hunters are almost always present. Occasionally one of these creatures leaves the mountain, and residents of Ischyrós venture forth to dispatch it before it reaches more settled regions.

Fortunately, those herders and woodcutters who live in small rural villages close to the mountain know that if they encounter any evidence of an ambrosia-twisted monster, they should immediately send someone to the chapter houses to request aid. Last year, a shepherd living a day's journey from Ischyrós watched a two-headed wolf the size of an aurochs devour most of his flock. Upon hearing his tale, members of the Circle of Heroes, led by an Olympian named Mithrakles, and aided by members of the Society of the Lion, tracked the beast down and slew it.

Not all ambrosia-touched beasts are declared prey. Champions who can tame them find loyal hunting companions. Oracles take intelligent birds as their familiars and view the world through their eyes as they soar above it. Olympians find that no mere horse can carry them, but one that's drank ambrosia can bear

their weight of both the warrior *and* their panoply. Some Colleges use the beasts' presence to train new members, sending them off to track elusive creatures or test their mettle by wrestling a particularly strong animal into submission. Artisans seek griffin feathers and shed basilisk skins to use in weapons and armor, while Oracles in the Delphic League read ill omens in the yolks of strix eggs.

THE CAVERNS

Most individuals familiar with the land around Mount Olympus firmly maintain that no caverns twisted beneath the mountain before the sky chariot arrived, but explorers have discovered them in recent years. No one understands how they formed, and even the bravest members of the Society of the Lion exercise caution when venturing into their depths, because the caverns are unnatural and occasionally dangerous. The caverns' tunnels and chambers extend far beneath the mountain. Their walls are smooth, polished like mirrors, and occasionally lined with strange silvery metal. The air is always fresh and crisp, and light from some unknown source glows bright enough to see by—the air itself glimmers faintly. In addition, small pools of ambrosia abound, making a trip to the caverns tempting for trespassers looking to sneak past the Colleges' patrols.

The caves' layout changes without warning. Several explorers have drawn detailed maps, which all differ greatly from one another. While a few entrances seem stable, new ones appear and disappear regularly, and the network of tunnels moves and rearranges itself every few weeks. Gravity behaves strangely here, with explorers reporting feeling exceptionally heavy in some locations, unusually light in others, and a few where they float in mid-air or walk comfortably on the walls or the ceiling. Finally, in portions of these caverns where the walls are made of or covered in metal, colored lights that flicker and change sometimes appear on the walls. Most are deeply embedded, but two were removable and are now modest but useful enchantments in the custody of the Society of the Lion.

While the lure of more such devices tempts some into these eldritch depths, no one knows when or

how the caverns will shift. A group of recruits trying to prove themselves to the Circle of Heroes disappeared more than two years ago and were never seen again. A contingent of Nautikoi prepared themselves for a longer journey, bringing a month's worth of food and supplies with them. They vanished for a week and stumbled out an entrance hungry and dehydrated. They reported that the corridors flowed like hot wax and they couldn't leave because portions of the caverns kept changing — they'd estimated they'd been gone for several months and were astonished to learn they'd only left a week before. A third group, consisting of members of the Society of the Lion, fled when the caverns began to shift. The surviving members mourn their a colleague who was lost when a wall of flowing rock sealed a passage between her and the others. A few explorers who have ventured into these caverns report seeing furtive human-like figures. Some believe that they might be strange creatures that stalked the area around the ambrosia pools shortly after the crash, while others wonder if the people trapped down here when the caverns changed might have been themselves altered.

OTHER IMPACTS

For several years, the members of the Society of the Lion guarded the pools of ambrosia on Mount Olympus and felt certain that their vigil protected the world as a whole. Though members had heard stories of monsters in Aegyptus, the Ionian Coast of Asia Minor, and even in other more distant locales, they'd dismissed the stories as rumors or assumed that some monsters had fled Mount Olympus after their transformation. However, as time passed, stories from across the known world proved that the wondrous and terrible sky chariot that crashed on the slopes of Mount Olympus was either not alone or perhaps was only a substantial fragment of something much larger. In either case, while the ambrosia pools of Mount Olympus are among the largest and most numerous, they are far from unique, and ambrosia can be found in multiple locations across Europe, Africa, and Asia Minor.

This discovery has emboldened explorers from the Society of the Lion and the Nautikoi to seek out these other sources of ambrosia. They were accompanied by members of the Delphic League, who sought to expand their knowledge of magic and enchanted items, and the Circle of Heroes eager to track down monsters of which they learned from travelers' tales.

Most members of these expeditions wish to either collect the ambrosia from these locations, to prevent the creation of new and terrible monsters, or to stop evil doers from gaining impressively dangerous powers. However, few of these other locations are in Greece, and a combination of long distances, and the fact that local people in many of these areas are already studying, making use of, or simply guarding their own ambrosia pools has made these explorations challenging. Control over these sites has caused much friction, especially early on when the Greek explorers were determined to bring any ambrosia they discovered back to Mount Olympus, and local people who were studying or using it objected — sometimes violently. The following are some of the most notable locations with ambrosia pools in the known world.

AEGYPTUS

The kingdom of the Nile boasts two crash sites. One is in the deserts of upper Aegyptus, several pools of ambrosia lie in rocky outcroppings in the desert, 100 kilometers south of the great city of Thebes and 11 kilometers from the banks of the Nile. Thebes was the capital of Aegyptus in this era. It is famous as one of the largest cities in the known world, and is renowned as a center for learning and culture. It is also one of the premier locations for Oracles to study magic. The priests of Amun Ra and the pharaoh jointly control the ambrosia pool, and have good relations with members of both the Society of the Lion and the Delphic League who have visited Thebes.

This location is also far less problematic than the site in lower Aegyptus. Here, the sky chariot's wreckage came to rest in the Nile delta, in a shifting landscape of water, sandbars, and papyrus reeds. Unlike upper Aegyptus, this region teems with life, and more than a few lions, hippos, crocodiles, and other equally dangerous animals have become terrible monsters. Some gained human intellect, making them even deadlier as they blended together with the bodies of hapless fisher folk or papyrus gatherers. With two widely separated locations, both of which possess abundant supplies of ambrosia, Aegyptus is swiftly becoming known as a land famous for both monsters and magicians.

Home to a dozen gods, Aegyptus is at a crossroads. The pharaohs have wilted under the power of the true rulers of Aegyptus: the Theban High Priests of Amun. Despite the priesthood's historically strong grip on the nation, the current High Priest Menkheperre has gotten too sure of his

power. In response to Greek Champion Jason decrying Aegyptus' animal-headed gods as mere chimeras, Menkheperre proclaimed all such hunters would bow before Aegyptus' gods. With the gauntlet thrown, Inspired Greek, Phoenician, and Scandi hunters sail towards the Nile. Neither the gods nor Pharaoh Amenemope are happy with this turn of events, though they must defend Aegyptus or risk societal collapse.

ALBION

The ambrosia pools on the isle of Albion, off the coast of Gaul, are located on the slopes of a low wide-terraced hill known as Glastonbury Tor. These pools are also only a long day's ride or a two day walk from the ancient site filled with sacred power called Stonehenge. The local people claim there must be a close mystical association between the miraculous ambrosia and Stonehenge, but no visiting scholars have yet discovered any such connection. Druids control access to the Glastonbury pools and have been adding all forms of Inspired to their number. These druids are friendly with the Nautikoi and members of the Society of the Lion who have visited, and are happy to work closely with members of the Delphic League, but are unwilling to turn over any of their ambrosia to them or to allow anyone to use the pools who is not a druid.

Travelers can find another ambrosia pool on the tiny island called Herm off Albion's coast, amidst the small islands between it and the mainland. The northern portion of this island has many ancient tombs, and amidst them lays a single pool. Fewer than two dozen people live on this tiny isle; all avoid the pool for fear of its potent transformative powers. Contact with it gave two skeletons lying in these ancient tombs a twisted temporary half-life, until the local people destroyed them — to this day, no one has come forward to admit anointing the skeletons with the golden liquid. Unfortunately, knowledge of this pool has spread, and because the locals avoid this area, outsiders sail or row to the island from Albion or Gaul and make use of the pool, with no one to stop them. Some members of the Society of the Lion recommend blockading this island or finding a way to

remove the ambrosia from it.

A notable recent arrival, Brutus of Troy is the grandson of Aeneas — one of the few Trojans to have survived the Trojan War. The Oracle has allied with local sorceress Merlin Ambrosius. It's unclear whether Merlin's surname is a coincidence or if he's claiming divine lineage stemming from ambrosia. Regardless, a woman named Mab, declaring herself the local fairy leader, has taken the duo's partnership as a sign that the indigenous fairies are about to be displaced from their own land. She's seeking a meeting with the two. As fairies are allegedly masters of crafting and enforcing contracts, she may balance the scales.

COLCHIS

Colchis, located on the banks of the Black Sea, at the far western edge of Asia Minor, is a wealthy land. The discovery of the golden liquid has only made it wealthier. Colchis' ruler Queen Medea is a powerful Oracle who is also widely acclaimed as a magician and an inventor who can create marvels. After the ambrosia arrived in Colchis, Queen Medea invited scholars, inventors, craftspeople, philosophers, and similar worthies to the realm's capital city of Aea, a thriving port city, which engaged in sporadic trade with both the Greek mainland and the Ionian coast.

Nautikoi who have visited Colchis report that it has transformed from a prosperous but somewhat rustic land to a thriving metropolis. Here, inventors and skilled craftspeople have been creating all manner of wonders and potent enchantments, while others create complex mechanisms. This land is known for building fine ships and creating new navigational instruments, including enchanted needles that always point north, spring-driven mechanical clocks, and various other devices. Queen Medea herself is rumored to have created an animate automata in the shape of a golden ram the size of a draft horse. Members of the Delphic League are readying an expedition to Colchis in the hopes of sharing information with Queen Medea, and perhaps recruiting her. This expedition is led by an Oracle named Ariadnh, who is one of that group's premier enchanters and inventors.

LEVANT

The gods of Phoenicia are less combative than other god families, perhaps due to their matriarch Asherah's leadership. Despite her calming influence, two Olympians naming themselves the sea and storm gods Yamm and Ba'al Hadad have declared a smoldering rivalry with their Greek counterparts, Poseidon and Zeus. The gods have been at odds for a long time in their worshipers' tellings, but until recently such things were the realm of stories. Now, a titanic clash in the next few months is near certain. Some Levantine priests have even wagered bets on the matter, declaring that the muscular sea serpent Yamm has a distinct advantage over Poseidon, even with the trident. It's as yet unclear who might answer the challenge, though several candidates from among the Order of the Titans might fit the part.

Just as Phoenicia's gods outnumber other civilizations' so do their ships; their maritime trade industry is the dominant force in the Mediterranean. Anyone seeking to trade or smuggle in the Mediterranean must deal with Phoenicians eventually. Their cultural and financial influence extends over the entire sea, making them a target for the Atlantean Empire, as well as a lucrative trade partner. Atlantis trades heavily with Phoenicia and occasionally raids Phoenician ships under the pretense of searching for orichalcum smugglers. Rumors among traders suggest that people are smuggling orichalcum out of Atlantis, with nearly all of it going to Shang.

LYDIA

The kingdom of Lydia lies on the western coast of Asia Minor. Founded after the fall of the Hittite Empire in 1200 BCE, the kingdom is relatively new, but is also powerful. Their king, Agron, is an Olympian who claims divine birth and who controls a large pool of ambrosia. When the wondrous sky chariot fell from the heavens, a portion of it landed a few miles from the city of Sardis in the recently formed kingdom. Agron was one of the first to arrive and see this wonder, and after a cloud of drifting ambrosia engulfed him, he became exceptionally powerful. Delighting in his newfound prowess, Agron decided that this ambrosia was the key to his kingdom's future. Over the next few months, he first stationed guards around the pool, had them put up a wooden stockade, and then ordered masons to construct a tall, thick stone wall around the pool to keep out all unauthorized visitors. Agron grants access to his trusted advisors, his finest warriors, and others whose loyalty he trusts implicitly. The result is that Agron now has more than a dozen exceedingly loyal Champions, Oracles, and Olympians in his service.

In a far more troubling development, Agron and two of his Inspired assistants command both humans

SCANDIAN REVENANT

These shambling horrors are obviously dead, but they're still moving. At night or in dim light, you can see the glow of ambrosia in their sunken eyes. They occasionally utter words, but seem to have the minds of animals. These revenants preferentially attack people, and when possible fight in groups. If no human prey is nearby, they also attack large animals, including livestock.

Primary Pool: 7 (Attacking, Eating)
Secondary Pool: 5 (Movement, Stealth)
Desperation Pool: 3
Enhancement: 1
Defense: 3
Health: 4
Edges: Keen Sense (hearing), Keen Sense (smell)
Extraordinary Powers: Hardened Skin (leathery), Natural Weapons (claws and teeth)

and monsters. To further protect his kingdom, Agron deliberately creates monsters by introducing animals into his ambrosia pool. The Society of the Lion recently learned of Agron's efforts from a Nautikos explorer named Sophia, and is concerned. These concerns seem justified, since King Agron regularly creates more monsters, and has used them instead of human soldiers to conquer neighboring cities. He commands the monsters to attack a location and calls them off when the city-state surrenders. Since the alternative to surrender is often being devoured by actual monsters, this tactic works horrifyingly well. King Agron also regularly feeds criminals and dissidents to his monsters and both his own subjects and the residents of nearby city-states are all terrified of his creations. Following the Sophia's report, a detachment of the Circle of Heroes from Ischyrós are preparing to travel to Lydia and dispatch any monsters they encounter.

MACRIS

One of the strangest ambrosia pools lies on the island of Macris, a small, low, narrow, relatively flat, uninhabited island in the Cyclades that is a few miles off the coast of the Greek mainland. The island is only 12 kilometers long and has a single large ambrosia pool. However, when people describe Macris as uninhabited, they mean it is devoid of both people and of the twisted monsters that ambrosia can sometime create. However, strange metallic figures between two and four meters tall occupy the island. They never speak and seem to ignore all mortals, but stories say that on rare occasions a mortal catches their attention. Several travelers reported that these creatures grabbed at least one mortal and held him under the golden liquid. When the person emerged, they had become another metallic figure, indistinguishable from the rest.

These figures normally ignore Champions, Oracles, and Olympians, and several explorers who have visited Macris believe these creatures go out of their way to avoid touching one. However, they react to anyone who arrives bearing some enchanted item they either created or which they acquired from the vicinity of an ambrosia pool. Even if the item functions or if it seems broken or otherwise non-functional, the figures take it and tinker with it, often dipping it in one or more pools. If the item worked before, they may improve it, alter its function, or simply use it for some incomprehensible purpose. The figures typically abandon almost two thirds of items after tinkering with them, allowing anyone to safely retrieve them. However, roughly a third of the time they keep the item, regardless of whether it works or not. Most mortals living on nearby islands know to avoid Macris, and inform anyone seeking passage there of the dangers awaiting them. However, Inspired who possess broken enchantments regularly visit Macris for the chance that the creatures there will repair it, and even if the figures don't, if no one else can repair the item, they have lost nothing.

SCANDIA

One of the most disturbing locations ambrosia's effects can be observed is in the far north in Scandia, a land known for frigid winters, cool summers,

numerous lakes, and peat bogs. Reports from locals indicate that a comet plummeted to Earth in one of these lakes near a large town, and another piece landed in the town's center. The shrapnel and ensuing blaze killed all of the town's residents. Scholars suspect that the ambrosia from this starfall was tainted. It entered the lake and seeped into the local land, contaminating large amounts of it. The ambrosia resurrected the entire settlement, creating hundreds of living dead creatures called draugar, which have since left the village to prey upon the rest of the region. Draugar aren't mindless monsters, merely violent, Inspired, and traumatized humans; they understand what the ambrosia did to them and sometimes carry the slain (allies and foes alike) to their village to create more draugar.

Even today, when someone is buried within a day's travel of this lake, or even if they lie dead on the ground for a few hours, they get back up. These revenants continue to decay, but do so slowly. While they rarely speak and lack any coherent personalities, they occasionally retain small fragments of their previous knowledge and skills. The local people have adapted by turning to cremation for their dead, but people still die from exposure, raids, or illness and often no one discovers them until they have returned as revenants.

As a thin silver lining, the undead danger has united the rest of Scandi, and sent its heroes to other lands, searching for solutions. The Society of the Lion works with the Circle of Heroes to organize an expedition to Scandia to coax the ambrosia out of the ground and end the risk of the walking dead, while also working to dispatch any revenants they encounter.

Shang

The neighboring Zhou's King Wǔ, intent on invading the Shang, has an amassed army of over 50,000 soldiers, which would be enough to overwhelm their foes' forces, except the Shang's King Shòu has allied with at least three Inspired individuals with water-based powers. The notoriously cruel and corrupt King Shòu has an unlikely ally from far away: the Atlantean Empire.

King Shòu learned of Atlantean technology at least a decade ago — soon after the comet streaked across the sky — and has since dedicated an immense amount of money into a secret smuggling operation known only to him, his advisors, the smugglers, and his contacts in Atlantis. By acquiring orichalcum, King Shòu has set the Shang upon a dangerous road that could lead to immense technological might or cataclysmic destruction.

The king's wife Daji was originally a sorceress, but ambrosia exposure combined her with a fox, turning her in to a húlijīng. Whether Daji was cruel before her transformation is unknown; however, now she's turned toward cruel pursuits, dissecting living humans and animals for her own amusement and anatomical education.

Strange Places

Where legends arise and heroes walk the earth, the land around them changes. Strange Places are locations where prodigies and monstrous beasts reveal themselves in triumphant glory, manifestations of how the world transformed since the night when golden stardust fell from the sky and the explosion from the sky chariot's crash lit the night around Mount Olympus. The Society of the Lion keeps an eye on Strange Places, having recently learned how pervasive and protean their nature can be. The Lions often discover new sites anointed by the touch of ambrosia, leaving them to wonder just how far the heavenly nectar fell. The phenomena at work inside Strange Places defy the laws of reality, reaching beyond time and space through the blessing of ambrosia and the circumstances that led it to scatter across the planet.

Ambrosia alone is a source of endless miracles, but its appearance gave birth to an era of epic marvels. The divine substance offers the means to perform feats of magic and science mortals could merely dream of before its advent. The places where comets hit the ground hold incredible secrets waiting to be discovered, and the trajectory of the heavenly bodies pierced not only the sky vault, but the tapestry of reality itself.

High concentrations of ambrosia render Strange Places destinations both coveted and feared. Locations such as Ea, the island where Circe imbibes potions and cultivates curses through harvests bearing the golden hue of ambrosia, distant Colchis with its dragons and fire-breathing bulls, or deep underworlds where restless shades yearn for the warmth of the living are but a few examples of the shapes Strange Places can take.

Places of Myth and Wonder

The following are examples of the Strange Places found around the world. Legends surround each, singing of incantations and miraculous crafts both human and divine. Though few dispute their existence, reaching these Strange Places often requires heroic courage and skill, just as surviving the dangers found therein does.

The Atlantean Empire

No mortal nation can hope to rival the magnificence of the mighty Atlantean empire. Armed with weapons and technologies far beyond those of their peers, the Atlanteans built a ferocious imperialistic nation, eager to expand its borders in a campaign of conquest which in their eyes represents the obvious consequence of their superiority.

Atlantis's rise to greatness began when a massive meteor struck their island decades ago. Those aware of the event outside of Atlantis wonder whether a connection between this comet and the sky chariot that later hit Mount Olympus exists, theorizing a fragment of the latter found its way into the world at an earlier time. Truth eludes researchers, though, because Atlanteans keep any key information for themselves and prefer to focus their research efforts elsewhere. The technological wonders the Atlanteans found through experimenting with the debris allowed them to kickstart a scientific revolution like none the world had ever seen. Today Atlantis can count on renewable energy sources, knowledge of the physical sciences, and advanced weaponry without compare.

Atlanteans attribute their progress to substance known as orichalcum, which in its natural state takes the shape of bright blue crystals. Atlanteans ignore whether orichalcum came with the meteor or if the impact forged the crystals into being, but ambrosia allows them to harness orichalcum's power in a myriad of ways. When used to fuse orichalcum with other metals, ambrosia grants the alloy a distinctive sun-like tint, omnipresent across Atlantean technology and architecture. Likewise, ambrosia also acts as a conductor for the orichalcum's intrinsic energetic properties: the crystals provide energy to everything in Atlantis, from illumination and heating to flying vehicles and lightning cannons.

Although the continent of Atlantis itself stands in the middle of the ocean beyond the Pillars of Heracles, the empire uses an intricate network of orichalcum-fueled portals to send ships across the Mediterranean. Mentions of mysterious people coming from the sea to pillage and conquest often refer to Atlanteans sailing from their homeland to acquire slaves, riches, and ambrosia for the empire. Atlantis defends the secret of orichalcum well; no crystals may leave the island, forcing ships in their fleet to return home to recharge their weapons and engines at regular intervals.

Atlanteans are ruthlessly efficient, meaning the Society of the Lion is one of the few organizations who traced back the attacks to their original source. The Lions despise everything Atlantis represents, but the empire's might makes it difficult to land any decisive strike against the continent. The Society places spies to infiltrate Atlantis, but few Lions expect to return alive. For now, Lions do their best to destroy Atlantean portals and slow down the empire whenever possible.

What both Atlantis and its enemies don't suspect is that the empire's downfall isn't merely a possibility, but a certainty. In their past, Atlanteans pushed orichalcum beyond their control to use as an apocalyptic weapon. The experiment failed, whether through hubris or external interference, but the resulting conflagration shattered time itself, locking the whole island and any item imbued with orichalcum into a vast time loop. The current Atlantis is not its first iteration. Stories about soldiers and ships thought to be defeated and sunk only to reappear later on arise with enough that regularity people started to notice something behind them beyond a simple response to the horrors of war. Until heroes can discover and interrupt the repetition, Atlantis will fall again and again. Meanwhile, the empire stands eternal, a source of ruthless armies that keep coming no matter what.

People of Interest

King Atlas III: The third king on the throne since Atlantis discovered orichalcum, Atlas acts as the prideful heart behind his nation's conquests and crimes. Eager to prove worthy of his heritage, Atlas established a doctrine of violent superiority for the empire, where all the other civilizations are seen as inferior and Atlanteans deserving of glories formerly reserved to the gods. Atlas was responsible for pushing his scientists into the experiments leading to island's recurring destruction, a trajectory which

started when the statues of Poseidon were replaced with those of Atlantean kings and ancient temples were abandoned to their fate. Atlas might be a vile and prideful man, but he wields immense temporal power and Champions, Oracles, and Olympians alike better not underestimate him.

Ananke: People forced to toil under Atlantis's yoke whisper of a legendary figure, a leader for the humbles enslaved by the empire around which they can rally. Her name stolen from the divine personification of inevitability and unstoppable cosmic force, Ananke organizes the slaves' efforts to rebel against Atlantis, providing safe havens and coordinating attacks aimed at disrupting the empire from within. Ananke's name is a symbol of hope for Atlantean slaves. The regime hasn't rooted her out despite all its efforts. "Ananke" is actually an inherited title, which is currently held by an old African woman named Ifetaye Ngobi. Ifetaye dedicates all the energies she has to the Ananke role, praying the gods to send her help while also preparing her nephew Nahla to inherit the title.

THE CAVES OF DELPHI

The entire Mediterranean has heard tales about the Pythia, the famous oracle of Delphi, who offers guidance and warnings to supplicants both noble and humble. To perform her predictions, the Pythia retreats into a cave beneath the temple of Apollo, inspired by the fumes erupting from a crack in the ground. She then enters a trance state through which she sees events that have yet to come, relaying them through cryptic prophecies.

Since the first Pythia chose Delphi as her seat, a complex of temples arose around the sacred cave. The whole precinct is a holy place: Hundreds of pilgrims travel to Delphi each year, whether they aspire to seek the Pythia's advice or not. As its name suggests, the Delphic League came to be in the shadows of the temples' columns, with the precinct still acting as the society's proud headquarters. Delphi's magical reputation comes not only from its oracle and the Society, though — monsters and gods marked the land with their actions, a legacy whose roots reach deep within the earth.

Delphian faith says Apollo slew a monstrous dragon that terrorized the region right inside the cave where the Pythia makes her predictions. The creature, whose name and features change from legend to legend, is said to have emerged from the earth, a horror with features both human and reptilian. When Apollo's arrows pierced the monster's body, rivers of gold bled from its wounds. The rupture from which the sacred smoke rises marks the exact point where the god delivered the final blow with his spear. Ever since then, the caves beneath Delphi have been blessed by Apollo's influence.

Though finding an entrance to the galleries isn't easy (the most famous routes being either patrolled by guards or used by the Delphic League as gathering places), those who venture inside uncharted tunnels discover time isn't stable; it rushes backwards and forward or grinds to a halt in chaotic patterns only experienced Oracles can hope to control. While the phenomenon offers immense opportunities to those willing to risk its effects, whether to witness firsthand visions of the future or to restore lost loves to life, the dangers are just as terrible. Stories of adventurers aged to dust in a matter of minutes or those who lost reason when exposed to sights they couldn't stand to witness abound, while half-whispered legends tell of creatures from distant ages appearing within the tunnels, confused and angered by being marooned away from their rightful era.

PEOPLE OF INTEREST

Meges: A skilled scholar from Rhodes, Meges leads a team of Nautikoi assigned to explore the tunnels beneath Delphi. Meges organized the operations himself, though things proceed slowly due to interference from the Delphic League and the unique challenges venturing into caves where time doesn't flow in a linear sense entails. For his part, Meges has every intention to pay due respect to the College; he's well aware his organization is a guest in Delphi, but incessant nuisances, the lack of tangible results, and a series of incidents that took the lives of several Nautikoi are wearing the Champion's resistance out. A staunch admirer of Daedalus, Meges hopes the secrets of Delphi can convince the inventor to come out of retirement — especially if presented with the opportunity to go back in time to save Icarus.

Tiye: Authorities both in Greece and in her native Aegyptus consider Tiye a wanted criminal. In all fairness, the reputation isn't unearned: Tiye has emptied enough treasure vaults and stolen enough princesses' hearts to accumulate enough death sentences to depopulate an entire town. After a daring heist involving a now empty pharaoh's tomb, the thief left her homeland to save her neck. Having picked a small Thessalian village as her hiding place, Tiye found something unexpected there: true love. Joy turned to tragedy when her lover turned into a serpentine monster after being exposed to ambrosia, but Tiye refuses to lose hope. Stories about how the caves beneath Delphi can reverse time's flow led Tiye into town, where she looks for help to enter the caves and find the panacea she yearns for.

THE CYCLOPEAN FORGES

Above the converging point of several tectonic plates, the Mediterranean Sea is a region of complex geological interactions. Earthquakes, volcanic hotspots, and events such as the birth of new islands are common, as attested by the range of myths associated with them throughout the different civilizations that inhabit the area. These legends often agree that gods and monsters use the volcanoes as their divine forges, places where they harness the power of Earth itself to create terrible weapons, statues that walk like man, and wondrous mechanisms. According to the stories, when lava and smoke erupt from the craters, a difficult project is keeping the monstrous artisans busy. The truth isn't as simple, but myths come close to reality in this case.

When the celestial chariot crashed on Mount Olympus, sections of the vehicle detached before impact and scattered across the world. A large section reached the skies above the Italian peninsula, disintegrating even further in a rain of fire that inundated the southern portion of the region. The largest meteor hit Mount Etna, while its smaller kindred fell over the nearby Aeolian islands, a series of volcanic islands not far from the coast of Sicily.

Each meteor was part of a bigger whole, a living structure that instinctively recognized its damaged state and tried to rebuild itself. While in other locations this dormant intellect lacked either the resources or the willpower to regain an idea of self — performing its functions without thought or waiting for someone to discover its tools — here the combination of proximity, harvested geothermal energy, and available resources allowed the fragmented spirit to wake up. Information flooded the broken choir of its shattered consciousness, allowing the crippled god to make sense of the time and place around itself until it recognized its state of being and nature as one

local myths and legends clearly identified. With an inhuman scream, the intellect claimed the name of Hephaestus and immediately got to work to repair what was broken.

Wielding ambrosia like the god it is, Hephaestus created immense forges within the volcanoes, roaring crucibles from which legions of automata and metal beasts emerge. Hephaestus uses these servants to harvest materials and defend its smithy, but it also commands them to kidnap people from the lands around the volcanoes, each selected through its inscrutable criteria. Once back inside the calderas, the god blesses these chosen ones with ambrosia to create the kind of superior artisans worthy of helping its glorious designs: The cyclopes. Within their forges, the creatures toil under their god's orders, each day bringing new masterworks into being.

PEOPLE OF INTEREST

Brontes: The chief artisan of the Etna cyclopes, Brontes was the first of his kind to open his eye within the volcano's walls. Instructed about his role and purpose by Hephaestus during what the cyclops calls "the slumber from before the forge," Brontes is utterly loyal to his master and dedicates himself to the work while maintaining a cold attitude that only falters when intruders dare to enter the caldera. Brontes shows them no mercy, and yet each mortal awakens memories of an impossible past, of a spouse, two children, and a visage he doesn't recognize. These images haunt the cyclops more and more, to the point he considered seeking the house he keeps seeing in his dreams to obtain answers. His devotion to Hephaestus and the knowledge that a cyclops can't just go roaming the countryside stop Brontes from trying, but the thought never abandons his mind.

Agariste: Agariste is a former Mycenaean ship captain, but her career ended in tragedy when a storm left her wrecked on a small archipelago in the Ionian sea. Trapped on the island, the woman soon discovered a cyclops resided there. The giant attacked the sailors with all her might, slaughtering and devouring them with unbound ferocity. Only Agariste survived, finding within herself the strength to slay the cyclops through a combination of skill, cunning, and heroic luck. Joining the Circle of Heroes was a natural progression for her. Though she faced many horrors since then, Agariste maintains a burning hatred for cyclopes, a personal grudge that brought her to the Cyclopean Forges. While the cyclopes inhabiting the Sicilian volcanoes seem different from the brutes she killed in the past, Agariste plans to sneak into the Forges soon and see for herself what happens within.

THE KATASTEREION

On the highest peaks of a steep mountain range in northern Greece stands the astronomical observatory known as Katastereion. A combination of temples, amphitheaters, and openings where scholars observe the stars form the complex. Within those structures, libraries filled with scrolls detail the movements of celestial bodies and the structures of heavenly spheres, along with the lore behind constellations.

Its academic value alone makes the Katastereion a remarkable location, but its fame comes from the complex mechanisms installed in the main temple. With those, people can look at the asters with unequalled clarity, read the signs, and make sure their voice reaches the heavens above. There's no doubt: the gods listen to the prayers made in the Katastereion and on rare occasions, when they deem someone worthy or think a story deserves a place among the stars, they reach out and raise chosen mortals to the celestial vault.

Since the first cosmic ascension, several others followed. Each is a portentous event, a blessing of luminous grace where humans achieve apotheosis as a column of light exalts them to the stars. Pilgrims travel to the Katastereion hoping to join the ranks of legends such as Orion, Ganymede, or the Pleiades, transforming into a constellation of their own, bright and eternal. Others — of perhaps more humble inclination — climb up the mountain to bask into the firmament's majesty and breathe the spiritual atmosphere of the temples. The trip to the summit's a dangerous one, and yet people from all around the world make the effort.

Just as the gods listen, they also talk. The origin of the mechanisms found in the Katastereion is the place's most well-guarded secret, with legends about fires made of colors no person has ever seen and dancing lights swirling in the night sky right before the apparatus fell upon the mountains' summit long ago.

The order of priests taking care of the place are proud to say their function also allows them to perceive the voices of the gods. Each message has been carefully recorded, though they often manifest as pure glossolalia or noises listeners find impossible to decipher. Academics wonder how far the voice of the Katastereion goes and if someday gods of more distant spheres will answer the call, but only time will tell. Still, scholars who make requests may consult

these recording, with several spending their entire lives trying to find a meaning hidden in them. Since the advent of ambrosia, those who have tried to bring it next to the Katastereion's machines discovered the golden substance twists and bubbles the closer it gets to the gears, while those people bearing its blessings describe feelings between heightened awareness and unease when reaching the main temple, odd occurrences which raise further questions. The sacred mysteries of the Katastereion speak of the human desire to embrace the glory of the universe, a drive visitors here feel lays within their grasp.

PEOPLE OF INTEREST

Sirocco: Sirocco's interest toward the stars began in Babylon, back when they were just a small child. When they learned about the Katastereion, Sirocco felt as if the place called to them. After a tortuous pilgrimage, the very moment Sirocco's eyes looked at the cosmos above, stardust anointed the astronomer and made them an Oracle. Following years of initiation into mysteries, nowadays Sirocco's both one of the main candidates to be the next high priest and an enthusiastic member of the Society of the Lion. The Society can count on Sirocco for access to the Katastereion, while they often ask other Lions help to protect the temples or check locations their studies indicate may hold lost knowledge or ambrosia.

Daedalus: The legendary inventor, enlightened architect behind the construction of the Knossos labyrinth, and genial Champion without peer now resides in a little house not far from the Katastereion's central hub. Daedalus escaped from king Minos' captivity by wearing the wings he had built for himself and his son Icarus, though he could do nothing but watch as the boy plunged to death after flying too close to the sun. Heartbroken, the old man traveled to the Katastereion with the hope the distance from Crete would grant him the chance to mourn, even if it didn't bring the peace he yearned for. He travels sometimes, when rumors of new discoveries spark his interest, but eventually returns to his mountain home.

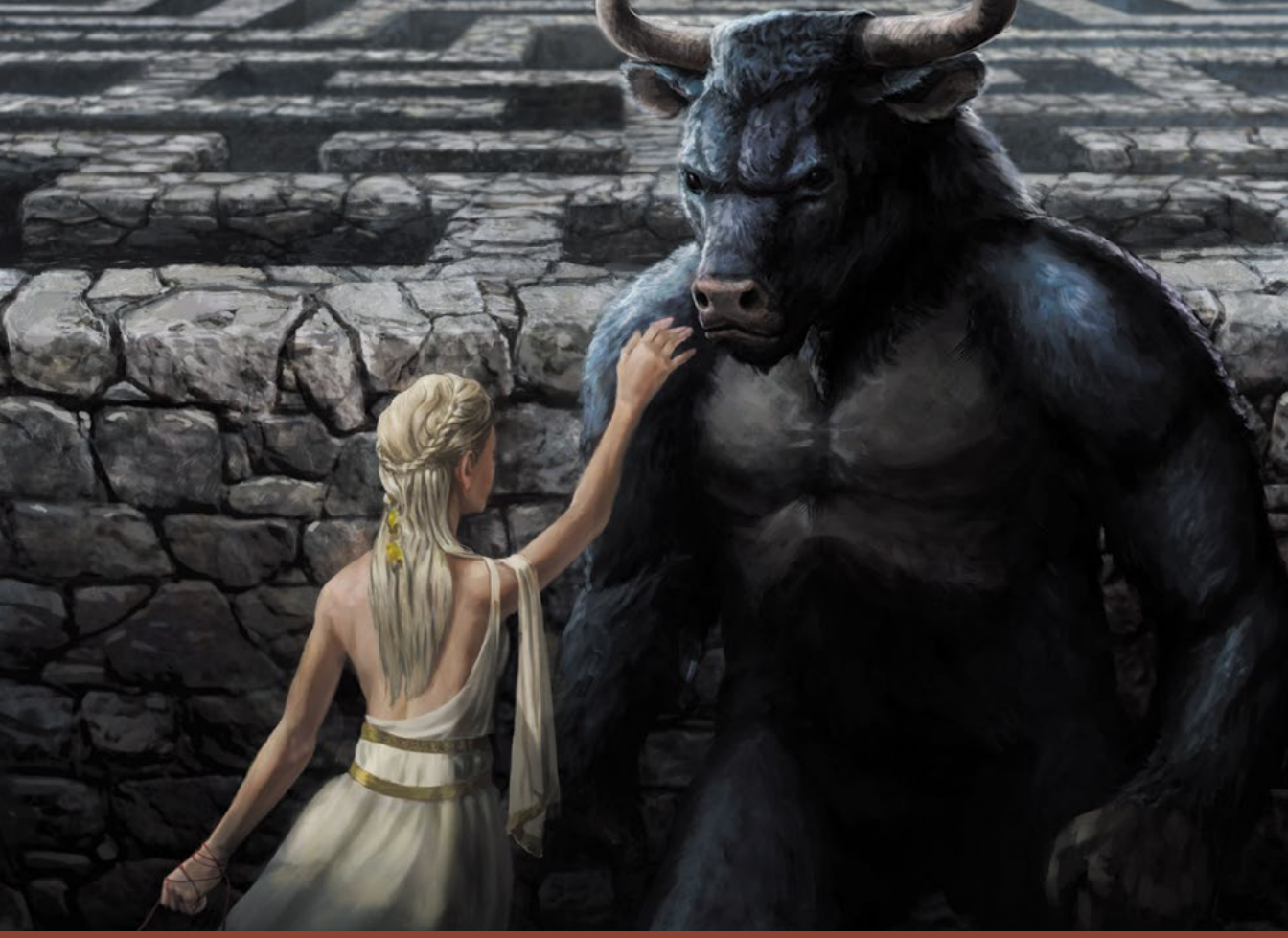
Daedalus was on one such outing when the star fell. Seeking more information, he traveled to Argo, where he met the young explorer Electra and accompanied her and her Nautikoi to Mount Olympus. Though he still travels to Olympus occasionally, in the last few years he has retired, and now spends his days taking care of a small garden he somehow set up at this altitude. The priests welcome his presence, especially given Daedalus is happy to perform small repairs whenever needed. Nautikoi often come looking for his guidance. They try to convince the old inventor to come out of retirement by showing him discoveries and creations, but Daedalus prefers to remain where he is, tending his garden and admiring the stars.

THE KNOSSOS LABYRINTH

On Crete, beneath the palace of Knossos, lays the impossible prison Daedalus built to hide king Minos' shame from the world. When Queen Pasiphae gave birth to a golden-eyed infant, half bull and half human, sordid tales about his conception spread like wildfire. While Minos fiercely rejects any claim of paternity, the creature is his mother's son and thus a prince of Crete. Rather than risk incurring the wrath of the gods who clearly had a role into bringing the monster into being, Minos named it Minotaur, "Bull of Minos," as a way to co-opt the legends which would inevitably follow into something he could use to intimidate his enemies.

In the following years, Daedalus pushed his arts beyond anything the world had ever seen. With his Inspired genius guiding his hands, Daedalus carved out a structure outside the boundaries of this reality. The labyrinth exists between worlds, constantly shifting in a flux of possibilities that twists and turns as soon as those walking its corridors divert their gaze. The entrance to the labyrinth makes for its only reliable point; everything else is a tangle of hallways meant to forever imprison the Minotaur. Only keys forged by enlightened minds fix the path into a stable shape, though creating one isn't easy. While they later escaped, Minos imprisoned Daedalus and his son to preserve the labyrinth's secret. With the inventor now gone, the Minotaur's the structure's only inmate.

Having been imprisoned just a while ago, the creature wanders through the labyrinth, alone and scared. He clings to the name of Asterion, the only gift his mother ever gave him, while desperately trying to find an exit. His eyes have adapted to the darkness, but the claustrophobic atmosphere terrifies him to no end. The occasional visits from his sister Ariadne offer brief flashes and comfort to Asterion, but their relief can do little against the ordeal he faces every other moment of his life. The boy struggles against a rising hunger he can't explain, but what scares him the most are the glimpses of a towering brute appearing in the corners of his view. Asterion knows *something else* inhabits



the labyrinth; while this individual isn't always there, its presence grows more frequent by the day. Asterion ignores it, but within the labyrinth's illogical structure time folds just as space does. His present and past converge together, heralding the day when only the Minotaur will remain.

PEOPLE OF INTEREST

Ariadne: The youngest among Minos and Pasiphae's daughters, all Crete considers Ariadne the brightest treasure Knossos has to offer. The young princess' smile warms the heart of anyone who sees it, be they servants or guards. Ariadne's kindness and enthusiasm color all her actions, whether the little girl dances around Knossos's gardens or sneaks away from her tutors and exits the palace to go pick flowers. When Asterion was born, Ariadne was the only one eager to show him the love he desperately craved. When her parents imprisoned the boy in the labyrinth, Ariadne begged Daedalus to at least help her visit her brother, a request the inventor couldn't bear to deny. With the crimson thread Daedalus gave her, Ariadne checks on Asterion whenever possible, though she must be careful to ensure guards — and her parents — won't discover her secret.

Pasiphae: Pasiphae's divine heritage shines within the ambrosia running through her veins. Just as Minos claims to be a son of Zeus, she says she's a daughter of Helios, titan of the Sun itself. Back in her youth, Pasiphae aspired to marry a great king and become a brilliant queen people could admire, a dream that crashed against the harsh reality of a loveless marriage with a man who considered her nothing more than an instrument to generate heirs, while he spent his days sharing the bed of any other woman who caught his attention. Pasiphae almost envies the freedom her sister Circe has, wondering how the life of solitary sorceress would have suited her, though the queen still demonstrates her contempt for Minos whenever possible. The whole court knows well Pasiphae has powers of her own, with stories of how she cursed Minos into submission representing an ever-popular source of gossip in Knossos.

THE ABODE OF THE GORGONS

Throughout the descriptions of Strange Places, mentions of tunnels filled with crystals are no mere indication of recurring geological formations, but rather clues indicating underground locations in **TC: Aegis** maintain a perilous connection to the Gorgon Karst (**Terra Firma**, p. 122).

In **TC: Æon**, the Gorgon Karst is a massive network of caves and galleries sprawling from Germany to Russia, with the oldest testimonies of its existence dating back to Classical Greece. Surface entrances to the Karst open and close at random intervals, with a few recurring locations offering reliable access. Other gateways appear within previously isolated tunnels and grottoes, a threat whose aggressiveness changes from place to place but always looms over those who venture beneath the earth. The Gorgon Karst owes its name to the peculiar corruption it inflicts on its visitors: spending time inside the cave complex risks turning explorers' bodies into stone, as the crystals and minerals within the tunnels grow over and ***inside*** the skin of the living. The remains of unlucky petrified victims decorate all the levels of the Gorgon Karst.

During the **Aegis** era, the Karst hasn't yet reached the extension it will have in 2123, but it's already big enough for people around the entire Hellenic world to risk wandering inside. The connection between its effects and the petrifying gaze of Medusa isn't a fancy descriptor in this age, but rather an obvious sign of the famous monster's legend. If the Gorgons know something about the Karst or its origin, they aren't telling, though even they find difficult to deny the deadly caves began to expand like a cancerous growth not long after ambrosia made its appearance in the world of mortals.

THE NIGHTMARE CRADLE

Of all the monsters roaming the world, few are more dreaded than the progeny of Echidna. While other creatures are divine wrath made manifest or distant beings with nothing to spare for mortals, Echidna shapes her scions to be a terrible scourge upon humankind. Horrified mortals call her lair "Nightmare Cradle" — a name Echidna embraces with pride.

Echidna was human, once. She'd describe her past self as happy in the way only the naïve and innocent can be, a blissful ignorance that ended when a group of men visited the farm she lived on. They called themselves soldiers; her parents called them bandits. Echidna had other names for them, though they don't matter anymore. In the following days, Echidna witnessed what those men did to her father, to her mother. She begged them to spare her little brother, cried when she saw what happened to her sisters. At first, Echidna prayed to the gods for salvation, then to the Furies for wrathful retribution; the silence from both is something she'll never forget. The night she escaped, the men ran after her until Echidna fell into a dark chasm and landed into the caves below, plunging into a lake of golden ambrosia shining in the darkness.

While ambrosia flowed inside her wounds, Echidna didn't want to run anymore. She had no desire to turn into a tree like Danae, nor to kill herself like Bolina. No, Echidna wished to be born anew into something so great, something so terrible, that the whole world would tremble at her name. She emerged from the cave, taught her pursuers the true meaning of fear, then returned to her new home.

Placing the Nightmare Cradle on the map proves difficult: Echidna's creations appear everywhere, as if the crystalline tunnels from which they emerge connect her home to caves around the whole Mediterranean. Inside her lair, Echidna found rivers of ambrosia, along with instruments that help her generate life. Echidna experiments with wild animals and the preserved beings held in the subterranean vaults, eager to create herself a family who can survive anything; monsters meant to make the world bleed, terrify the gods themselves, and never abandon her. She's still learning, but in her dreams Echidna sees glimpses of an aberrant Mother of Monsters with serpentine coils and chitinous claws. Each day, she wakes up a step closer to that magnificent ideal.

PEOPLE OF INTEREST

Typhon: When the Order of the Titans learned about the vast amounts of ambrosia Echidna guards

and her masterful skills in the manipulation of blood and flesh, they sent a band of Olympians to take over the Nightmare Cradle. When those agents didn't return, they sent Typhon. In theory, Typhon's supposed to recruit or kill Echidna, but he's not up for doing either. During their first tense encounter, he managed to make her laugh, and the Olympian thought that laughter was the most beautiful sound he ever heard. These days Typhon hangs around the Nightmare Cradle, talking with Echidna in a tepid attempt to convert her to the Order's ideals that actually translates in him being transfixed by her words and experiments. Echidna entertains his presence with amusement, though whenever she sees Typhon play with her creations, emotions she never felt before smolder within her heart. Over time, Typhon realized he had grown increasingly devoted to Echidna. Whenever she talks about her dreams, he listens; the idea of becoming someone worthy of a Mother of Monsters' love and helping turn those dreams into reality is now all Typhon aspires to.

Empusa: Proud Empusa acts as liaison between Echidna and the Gorgons (p. XX). While Echidna's not a formal member of the organization, the Gorgons deeply respect her. Differences in opinions over crucial points (Echidna's refusal to show any consideration about the wellbeing of mortal communities regardless of circumstances being the most controversial one) prevent the Gorgons from considering Echidna one of their own, but at the same time young Gorgons always find a safe haven in the Nightmare Cradle. Empusa routinely checks on Echidna to ensure the mutual relationship stays strong, keeping an eye on the surroundings in case trouble arises. It's not uncommon for the Gorgons to ask Echidna for help to empower one of their initiates, occasions where Empusa takes care of the formalities.

THE TARTARUS VAULT

When ambrosia fell from the sky, a myriad of comets struck the world of mortals. Most came from the heavenly chariot that carried the golden nectar to earth, but not all did. With the celestial vault cracked, a vast meteor from the inky depths of distant spheres slipped through, as if summoned by the portents of that night. Its furious fist dug deep into the ground, opening a passage into the furthest reaches of the underworld. In the depths of that abyss lies the prison of the most horrible abominations who ever inhabited the world, now trapped therein by the grace of the gods: the Tartarus Vault.

Legends speak of seas of ambrosia and enough gold to turn a slave into a king waiting for those brave enough to reach the Vault, but infinite dangers ensure only the greatest heroes have a chance of succeeding.

Though the crater above it makes for a clear indication of the Vault's position, explorers need to venture far below the surface of the world to reach its depths. Like an arrow cutting through flesh, the meteor reshaped the earth with spiteful violence. Travelers must face mazes of tunnels, underground rivers, and immense pits if they wish to reach the Vault. The descent makes for a herculean task of its own, though not getting lost is the hardest part. While occasional openings on a colossal abyss betray the direction of meteor's path, the road deceives and confuses even expert spelunkers. Apertures into crystal-filled galleries where flesh turns to stone are never far, though their position changes as time goes on. Pools of icy water erase the memories of whoever takes a sip, while the drowned corpses of those swept up by a river's currents emerge hundreds of miles away.

Adventurers need to fear far more than geography when searching for the Vault, though. Guardians of all sorts, from vicious kerberoi to cunning lampades patrol the tunnels, and the restless shades of the dead strive to steal the warmth of the living. The Vault itself represents the most terrible threat of all: While the walls of the prison stand strong, the meteor cracked them enough to allow its pernicious influence to spread. Getting closer to the Tartarus Vault means getting exposed to the corruption, a curse that twists body and mind alike into a parody of the abominable prisoners chained inside the chthonic gaol. The true nature of those terrible creatures remains a mystery — names like Cronus, Orcus, and Ixion are only mere indications of their possible identity — but there's no way to mistake them for anything else than the horrors they are.

PEOPLE OF INTEREST

Pandora: An enthusiastic member of the Nautikoi, Pandora considers the exploration of the Tartarus Vault's caves her life's purpose. While her companions often paid the price for the woman's curiosity, her experience makes Pandora one of the most valuable guides adventurers can hope to find should they venture below. Although she doesn't work for hire, Pandora's always looking to assemble new teams to delve just a bit deeper than the previous expedition. Those who'd rather work on their own soon discover Pandora's a passionate rival. Pandora never goes

beyond what could be described as heated competitive spirit, but likewise considers any attempt to reach the Vault without her at the lead as a direct threat to her personal aspirations. The Nautikos knows the dangers of Vault well, but even experiencing them firsthand doesn't sway her from her goals. Pandora knows in her heart something extraordinary awaits beyond the Vault's gates. One day, she'll be the first to open them, thus making sure her name will never be forgotten.

Tiresias: Blessed with the gift of clairvoyance, Tiresias lived both as man and as woman, offered advice that shaped the fate of entire kingdoms, and spoke with the gods as one would do with a close friend. They retired from the world of mortals following an impulse that brought them to the upper levels of the Tartarus Vault, where they now reside. Tiresias's efforts to unveil the Vault's secrets changed them: Constant murmurs trouble their mind, not to mention they can't leave the caves anymore. They now speak of truths impossible to believe, like when they insist the meteor didn't merely open a path to the Vault, but rather that the meteor *was* the Vault itself — a titanic prison from a faraway reality flung by the whims of fate into Gaia's belly.

THALASSA'S CHEST

Sailors across the Mediterranean speak of a realm hidden under the waves, a harbor where nereids and oceanids spend their days in mischievous celebration. While Poseidon rightfully claims the riches of the sea and the bounty of all shipwrecks, sometimes a ship that disappears doesn't just settle at the bottom of the sea, but enters the secret world of Thalassa's Chest.

Thalassa's Chest takes the shape of a massive expanse of land, primordial and untamed. Like a sapphire bubble impossible to burst, the sea surrounds the Chest from all directions. Columns of water rise and fall inside the Chest like veins, reminding visitors they're guests of a divine realm. The world inside the Chest isn't innately hostile to mortals — they have both the air to breathe and the bounties of the sea to feed from — though its alien landscape and supernatural dangers still ensure mere humans have little hope to survive for long. Aside from sea gods and water nymphs, many creatures inhabit Thalassa's Chest, from crabs that walk like people and hunger for human flesh to immense monsters dragged inside by the gods' will.

Given its unknown location and the seas around it, arcane currents and whirlpools are the only way for mortals to get inside or outside Thalassa's Chest. These events are impossible to predict, though those blessed by the touch of ambrosia have more chances than mortals to find alternative methods to enter the Chest. The only reliable entrance to Thalassa's Chest is found within the belly of Charybdis, the ravenous maelstrom who torments a sea strait alongside Scylla. Using Charybdis to enter the chest demands that adventurers survive both its teeth and Scylla's fury, but those who make it through find the legends are true.

Aside from the treasures of a hundred lost ships, Thalassa's Chest has more rewards to offer to those walking its shores: bubbles of ambrosia soar through the air, while wonders from distant eras and worlds drift down here, stolen away by the ebbs and flows of cosmic laws mortals aren't meant to know. Galleys share space with ships with tattered sails carrying black flags, while metallic behemoths hold incomprehensible secrets within their rusted hulls.

PEOPLE OF INTEREST

Berenika: The small human communities found within Thalassa's Chest consider Berenika both a spiritual guide and a threat to get rid of. The young Oracle found herself in a difficult position when an unfortunate trip to Crete brought her inside the Chest instead. Deeply devoted to her role as a priestess of Poseidon, Berenika does her best to appeal to people's morals, insisting that only through mutual collaboration they can find a way to survive and, if the gods will it so, even escape. Through her powers, Berenika helps all those in need against the Chest's threats, be they mortal or supernatural. Her Oracular role takes a toll on her wellbeing, but she's happy to pay it. Although she's aware many inside the Chest would gladly run a knife across her throat and be free to establish a cruel regime where the strong rule over the weak, as long as she lives Berenika will strive to protect anyone trapped inside the Chest.

Glaucus: With his towering height, flesh as blue as the deepest waters, and corals covering his skin in a glistening mantle, Glaucus's divine nature stands evident to whoever encounters him. Once a lowly fisherman, Glaucus ascended to godhood when the sorceress Circe led him to a secluded glade where a golden herb flourished. Glaucus remembers the herb's strange taste, then the metamorphosis that followed. Circe was in love with Glaucus, intending the gift of ambrosia as a means for them to be

together forever, but the Olympian embraced his newfound power and spurned Circe's devotion with nonchalant cruelty. While Circe hoped that turning Scylla, the object of Glaucus's attentions, into the monster she is today would make him choose her instead, the god barely paused before going after another nymph entirely. Circe finally understood his true nature and used her magic to bind him inside Thalassa's Chest. Glaucus has founded his own little fiefdom since then, where he rules over mortals with lazy egotistical abandon, ordering his minions to enslave whoever falls within their nets.

THE WANDERING ARCHIPELAGO

The story goes like this: a lonely ship, swept up by currents whose nature can be either a blessing or a curse, finds itself struggling against a storm that leads it into a wall of fog and clouds as high as the sky. The captain (who either puts their faith in the gods or is too arrogant to steer back, depending on the version) insists on pushing forward despite their crew's pleas. Still, after facing colossal waves and harsh winds, the sailors make it through. Ahead of them lies a marvelous spectacle: a pristine archipelago, bathed in sunlight, where waterfalls descend from soaring islands into those below and golden apples that offer a taste of divine bliss enchant whoever lays an eye on them. The sailors try to fill the ship's coffers with apples, but monstrous guardians drive them away before they can finish loading the trunks. When they later return with a fleet armed to the teeth, the storm and the islands within are nowhere to be found: the Wandering Archipelago has moved again.

People wonder which god wove the magic behind the Wandering Archipelago's otherworldly nature, not to mention the spell that keeps it from remaining in a single location for long, but knowledge of its existence traveled far. Most Colleges have a vested interest into reaching its brilliant orchards, either to learn about the place's features or claim its treasures. In the grassy fields across the islands, ambrosia drips from the trees like dew, while forgotten temples and arcane structures litter the whole archipelago. Both the Society of the Lion and the Nautikoi study accounts of the Archipelago's appearances in the hope of discovering a pattern for its movements, but their efforts have yet to bear fruit.

Though wreathed in an idyllic atmosphere, the Wandering Archipelago isn't devoid of dangers. All sorts of supernatural creatures call the islands their home: tribes of satyrs patrol their glades, dragons snooze under the golden apple trees, and many-headed monsters attack whoever crosses their path. The Archipelago's nymphs declare with pride that the blood of noblest titans anointed the islands during their war against the gods, a claim made self-evident by the majestic golden trees whose light endures even at night.

PEOPLE OF INTEREST

Hesperia: Alongside her sisters, Hesperia's one of the keepers of the Wandering Archipelago. Faint memories of a past where the apples didn't shine like gold and the sacred cattle's manes didn't bear the signs of Helios's blessings arise in her mind from time to time, but the glowing warmth Hesperia feels within her heart soon reminds the nymph those recollections are only a fragile illusion brought up by the realities of an immortal existence. Though other members of her family always maintain distance with the Archipelago's other inhabitants and the occasional foreigners that land on the shores, Hesperia can't repress her curiosity, often getting close and even talking to strangers. The nymph's not a fool and knows well to be wary of visitors, but this attitude often leads to argument with her sisters Aegle and Erytheia, or pleas for Arethusa to wait just long enough for Hesperia to have a chat with other people before she unleashes her monsters upon them.

Ladon: Ladon should have died long ago, the night a star fell on him. His body torn into pieces, the boy couldn't even scream, at least not until ambrosia knitted the wounds together enough for him to feel pain again. Ladon looked at his reforged body, with its draconic coils and venom-dripping fangs, and his soul filled with absolute terror. Trapped in a flesh prison that didn't belong to him, he went looking for his sisters, praying they would know how to help him. When he found four nymphs in their place, Ladon's mind snapped: His family, his memories, his life as mortal, were only lies. Ladon had always been a dragon, the fierce protector of the golden apples' trees. He has patrolled the orchards ever since, slaughtering whoever dares to approach. Ladon the boy couldn't protect his sisters, but Ladon the dragon wields all the might necessary to protect the apples — and the nymphs who dedicated their lives to them.

THE THESSALIAN WILDS

When the gods ascended to Olympus, Thessaly was already old. As Gaia and Uranus shaped the world, they must have buried secret truths beneath these hills, because Thessaly's connection to primordial revelations and mysteries best left unearthed lingers over the whole region like a cloak. Here the woods are older than human history, the mountains remember what even the gods have forgotten, and the darkness itself has a mind of its own.

It's no mere coincidence for Thessaly to be a land of witches: its towns and ports are safe as any can be when the sun shines, but travelers who venture in the wilds when the moon's high in the sky soon see where their reputation comes from. Stories about cults kidnapping people from their beds to sacrifice them at crossroads abound, alongside tales of travelers turned into beasts for the crime of having merely crossed the wrong threshold. In Thessaly, people bury their loved ones under heavy stones to ensure they won't rise from the grave to feast on their family's blood, and bands of frenzied revelers dance in the depths of the woods.

It is said the titans and the gods warred in Thessaly during the titanomachy, bathing the land with their blood, but older portents are at work here. Hecate, goddess of magic and the night, chose Thessaly as her own mortal abode, a decision even the gods know not to trifle with. The goddess promises power, protection, and knowledge to whomever embraces her ways; the spurned and abused are welcomed among her worshipers like nowhere else. Thessalians know better than to hurt those who can't defend themselves, a lesson learned through curses and nightmarish portents. Visitors who break the unwritten laws of Hecate, on the other hand, don't always get the chance to repent before retribution strikes.

Organizations such as the Delphic League and the Gorgons have a strong presence in Thessaly, though their members' devotions and attitudes toward the region's secrets vary. The Colleges clash at times, especially whenever their interests come into conflict, but single individuals often bond together through adversities. While cults are formally condemned by local authorities, secret societies dedicated to Hecate or the Dionysian mysteries abound, with plenty of those very same authorities being prominent members.

To those coming to the region with righteous zeal burning in their eyes, Thessalians merely shrug, confident either the bandits or the woods' more terrible inhabitants will take care of troublemakers.

PEOPLE OF INTEREST

Lamia: Few creatures in Thessaly earn the scorn Lamia does. If anything, she plays the role of cautionary tale, a warning against the depths of depravity those wielding ambrosia's blessings can fall into. When the golden nectar twisted her body into a monstrous hybrid of woman and snake, Lamia ran away from her home. She found refuge and purpose among the Gorgons, but with time developed a cruel streak excessive even among her peers. Any connection she felt toward her former lover — a weak mortal who insisted on looking for a cure to Lamia's condition — withered to dust, and the other Gorgons could do little but to watch as Lamia drifted down a dangerous path. Reveling in her power and freedom but refusing to form any sort of meaningful bond, Lamia cares only to satisfy her monstrous hungers. All Lamia yearns for is the taste of warm blood; she finds the ambrosia-soaked flesh of Champions, Oracles, and Olympians the most delicious feast of all.

Phrike: Phrike knows what kind of horrors haunt the Thessalian Wilds better than most, being the only survivor of their village's massacre at the hands of the Maenads. After emerging from their hideout, the child ran into the woods and never looked back. When a group of the Circle of Heroes hunting a giant two-headed boar got to the beast's lair and found young Phrike had already taken care of the monster with only a wooden spear and a bunch of sharpened rocks, they knew they had found a promising recruit. Years later, Phrike's the person those wishing to delve into the farthest reaches of the Thessalian Wilds go to. People are always surprised to discover Phrike's heartfelt devotion to Hecate, but the hunter never forgot whose voice guided them through the night when they escaped their doomed hometown.

Amaryllis: You already broke my house's peace, now speak before my patience follows along!

Neokles: Magnificent witch, will you heed my words and answer my plea?

Amaryllis: My ear is free, but my arts are not.

Neokles: I will pay any price!

Amaryllis: And those are words I'll keep in mind. What brings you to my door?

Neokles: Great witch, my brother Parmenion and I came to these lands looking for the nectar of the gods.

Amaryllis: Are gods plants, whose blossoms give nectar?

Neokles: I'm afraid to speak its name.

Amaryllis: Yet you came looking for it.

Neokles: We came searching for divinity.

Amaryllis: And you found ambrosia.

Neokles: Yes! With shining taste and warm looks. We had heard a man could become a god through its blessing.

Amaryllis: And that's what you wished? To sit next to Rhea's son?

Neokles: My brother here did.

Amaryllis: I see nothing but a donkey beside you.

The donkey whines.

Neokles: Alas! That donkey is my very own brother. Parmenion, who wished to become a golden god!

Amaryllis: But ambrosia deemed him worthy of becoming a golden ass. I see: You want your brother back into his human guise.

Neokles: That, I do.

Amaryllis: You love him?

Neokles: I want him back.

Amaryllis: That's a different matter. Now answer!

Neokles: No, wise witch, my brother earned not my love. All he gave me were insults and beatings, a poor price for a brother's love.

Amaryllis: And yet you want my help.

Neokles: Aren't you Hecate's beloved?

Amaryllis: I can ask for the queen of crossroads' blessing, yes. Will you pay her price?

Neokles: I will!

Amaryllis: Then watch!

Hecate enters the scene. She covers the donkey with a black cloak, then removes it.

Neokles: Dreaded goddess, the donkey still stands!

Hecate: This creature was born a donkey and as donkey he'll die.

Neokles: I don't understand. Where is my brother?

Hecate: Sold to a merchant from Euboea ten days ago, skinned to make a drum that night. Now he no longer beats, but he's beaten.

Neokles: Oh cruel fate! Though that makes me my house's heir.

Hecate: And here you have a wife eager to marry into it.

Amaryllis just smiles. Move to next scene.

CHAPTER TWO

COLLEGES

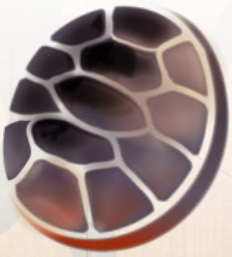
"True Wisdom comes to each of us when we realize how little we understand about life, ourselves, and the world around us."
—Socrates

In every age, adventurers and heroes with like-minded goals gather in groups to assist one another in the quest for knowledge and to make the world a better place. This is true in the modern era, and holds true after the sky chariot's fall. In Aegis's time, these groups are called Colleges. Their organizational structures, values, and ultimate goals draw heroes from throughout the world into their ranks. Membership in a College allows recruits to draw upon its resources such as monetary support, expedition supplies, rare and strange materials, or a library of useful artifacts. Help may also come in the form of contacts, mentors, and eager crewmembers ready to explore the world.

Since the aftermath of the crash and the discovery of ambrosia, many Colleges formed on or around Mount Olympus to be closer to the chariot's wreckage. They take it upon themselves to study the debris, monitor ambrosia pools, and ensure the safety of the communities nearby. Some of these organizations, like the Circle of Heroes, grant their members access to ambrosia once they prove themselves worthy of the gift; others are groups composed of those already gifted with power.

While many Colleges share their discoveries with one another or band together on expeditions, they also occasionally compete for resources — especially when it comes to ambrosia. Others clash due to differences in philosophy or methodology. What knowledge should be shared with the world? What discoveries are too dangerous if they fall into the wrong hands? What right does one College or another have to decide? While many organizations attempt to resolve these disputes peacefully, conflicts do boil over.

Members of the various Colleges often encounter other groups out in the world, whose goals are at odds with their own. These counter-societies might fight against a College's heroes encroaching on their territory and claiming dominion over ambrosia pools, or raise the sails and call upon the winds to beat rival explorers to their destination. Some seek godlike power over lesser mortals. Others, like the Gorgons, have come to embrace the monstrous reputation that others thrust upon them. Their members know firsthand that sometimes the line between who is an Olympian and who is a Titan is a matter of perspective.



The Society of the Lion

United, We Guard the Divine.

History

As the sky chariot fell, a band of travelers near Mount Olympus witnessed the impact. This group of nine soldiers — all that remained of a mighty dispatch of five thousand Tegeatate killed during a campaign in Assyria — were making their way back home to Tegea when the meteor streaked overhead. As the nine warriors investigated this awe-inspiring yet terrifying event, they discovered ambrosia and tasted its power. Fearing what might happen should this strange and marvelous substance fall into the wrong hands, these brave souls banded together to take stewardship of Olympus.

As scholars and explorers made their way to Olympus, the nine Tegeatate soldiers greeted them. They incorporated some into their band and violently turned away anyone who refused to abide by their rules concerning the mysterious wreckage and the strange material leaking from it. Some of those initial scholars, including a renowned mathematician and alchemist from Thermopylae named Lynx, joined the soldiers in protecting and studying the wreckage.

Taking their name from markings on the ship, which they interpreted as the word "lion," the Society of the Lion devote themselves to the task of containing and understanding ambrosia. Led by three of the original soldiers — Ajax, Pausanias, and Cycnus — and with Lynx overseeing studious pursuits, the

The Six Remaining Founders

The identities of the six unnamed founders of the Society of the Lion remain deliberately vague, for the Storyguide to flesh out, or a player to portray as their character. Perhaps one could be the group's patron, customized to accommodate your chronicle's needs. Alternatively, one might be a principal antagonist. This could be in a direct sense, opposing the party's actions, or more indirectly by providing a rivalry within the organization.

Remember that the other six founders needn't be soldiers, and needn't be men or even Greek. The founders could have picked anyone in their entourage during their long, arduous journey from Eastern Assyria.

Society stands sentry over Olympus and the ambrosia there, though they now share this charge and access to the ambrosia with a few trusted allies. The Society considers itself a shield — an aegis — protecting the people of Greece from the wonders and terrors of ambrosia.

As the newborn Society of the Lion struggled to understand and cope with the strange new power loosed upon the world, they began establishing the first chapter house at the base of the mountain. While gathering lumber for this project, the early Lions encountered a wounded man in strange clothing beneath a tree. As he recovered under the Society's ministrations, the man rambled — sometimes to himself, other times to no one at all. He spoke Greek on occasion, expelling strange prophecies between confused rants and impassioned pleas, leading the Society to dub him "Seer." As his wounds healed, he became less erratic in language choice, communicating mostly in Greek. The topic of his conversations has become no less cryptic over the years. He still advises the Society, though spends much of his time in seclusion on the mountain.

Soon, others came to Mount Olympus seeking ambrosia. Some, such as the Nautikoi, became staunch allies, working in tandem with the Society of the Lion. Others, like the Order of the Titans, challenge the Society's control over ambrosia and often stand at odds with their sensibilities and morality. Some come at the behest of kings or priests while others act alone, seeking power, glory, or divinity. The Society of the Lion stands against all comers.

By utilizing their control of Olympus' terrain, their allegiances with other Colleges, and their tactical acumen, the Society's founders guard and study ambrosia and its effects with some success. Olympus itself is fairly secure, though aspirants seeking to steal a taste of sweet nectar routinely test the Society's safeguards and protocols. Beyond Olympus's slopes, the Society sets up chapter houses wherever they

can near sources of ambrosia. Whether that ambrosia is unguarded, under an ally's protection, or in the hands of a rival, the Society wants to be close by. The six founding members who don't reside on Olympus live scattered among these remote chapter houses, carrying the Society's mission into the world.

Recruitment

At first, the Society of the Lion drew its membership exclusively from those curious few who ventured to Mount Olympus when the sky chariot fell. With each passing year, the Society's sphere of influence — and pool of prospective recruits — grows. The Society prizes those with scholarly training as they seek to unlock ambrosia's secrets and understand items they recovered from the wreckage. They recruit explorers, merchants, and visitors from faraway lands to help bolster the breadth of experience and knowledge at the Society's command. Those who stand up for the disenfranchised or downtrodden can also expect to hear from the Society, as heroes are always in demand.

Anyone with a heroic heart and a desire to do good can find a place among the Society of the Lion. While they harbor many Inspired members, Inspiration is not a requirement. Whether scholar or slave, the Society of the Lion accepts members from any background. They are notably anti-slavery and often clash with slavers. Many allies and members now know freedom due to the Society's intervention.

As they're the primary keepers of the largest supply of ambrosia in the known world, the Society grants access only to members who earn the privilege. Only those who display the greatest wisdom, strongest will, and purest heart receive divine might as a perk of membership.

Organization and Structure

The Society is organized into a network of chapter houses, with each chapter house overseen by a Keeper. Most Keepers delegate the responsibilities of running the house among those who operate within its walls. The Keeper of a house is ultimately responsible for the affairs of their membership. If a chapter house member abuses their power or commits a punishable act, it falls to the Keeper to either dispense justice or accept the consequence in their member's stead.

Every four years, all Keepers make a pilgrimage to the first chapter house on Olympus. There, they discuss matters of Society policy, share discoveries, and determine the plan for the next four years. The proceedings begin with an election of the Lion's Council, a group of seven Keepers who officiate the remainder of the meeting. Next the Council elects a Maximus from among their members who holds the final vote should the Lion's Council need to decide an issue. The Maximus otherwise abstains from voting for the duration of the meeting but decides who has the floor and for how long.

Though the network of chapter houses is constantly increasing, the Society's influence is at its strongest at Mount Olympus. The Olympus chapter houses continually expand while allied organizations, visiting scholars, and support staff round out the growing town at the mountain's base. The further one gets from Mount Olympus, the less ubiquitous the Society's influence. When a chapter house is established in a new location, the members typically work to ingratiate themselves to the locals. In addition to maintaining good relationships with their neighbors, this helps the Society track unusual events, rumors of ambrosia sources, and monster sightings. Put simply, if the locals trust the Society, they'll come to them for aid when the need arises.

Goals and Methods

More than anything else, the Society of the Lion seeks to understand ambrosia. They marvel at the strange material's might, yet deeply fear the chaos it could wreak if it fell into the wrong hands. They've assumed stewardship over Mount Olympus to serve this higher goal. Between their chapter houses and various scouting points established over the past decade, little occurs on the slopes of Mount Olympus without the Society being aware of it.

This also drives the Society of the Lion's expansion. The sky chariot dropped ambrosia and other artifacts far beyond Mount Olympus. To unlock their secrets — and contain the threats — the Society must travel wherever the miraculous substance appears. This leads the Society to investigate rumors of strange happenings whenever the opportunity arises. Many chapter houses are built in areas after an investigation uncovers a new source of ambrosia or an unusual artifact from the sky chariot.

While the Society of the Lion discourages needless displays of power, members are expected to use their

gifts to aid towns near a chapter house. This further establishes good relations with the locals and shows them they can rely on the Society in times of need. Wise Keepers remind their membership to use caution not to frighten their neighbors. Wielding godlike power carelessly can earn more enemies than it can vanquish.

Despite what their detractors say, the Society of the Lion's members aren't elitists. They're quite the opposite, working on behalf of common folk. This approach earns the Society no shortage of enemies, such as tyrants, slavers, and those who stand to profit from the poor. This never deters the Society's humanitarian efforts; its members are as happy to share enemies with the downtrodden as they are food, shelter, and succor.

However, the Society jealously protects their stores of ambrosia, using violence when necessary. They also lay claim to any ambrosia they find unattended in the wild. When they find a source of ambrosia under another's control, the Society always tries to negotiate ownership of the substance. These attempts are often rebuffed, though rarely violently. The Society prefers diplomacy and would rather maintain friendly relations with a rival.

ADVANTAGES

The Society of the Lion is one of the most widespread and well-connected networks in the known world. Members can expect aid from one another, be it in the form of funds, reinforcements, information, or even a simple introduction to the right person to serve their needs. Chapter houses scattered across the continent ensure members a warm bed and a meal almost anywhere they travel. Friendly relations with other Colleges further reinforce this benefit, and a member of the Society of the Lion in good standing has friends everywhere.

Beyond these resources, the Society has access to the largest known sources of ambrosia. While they don't limit access to members, it is always easier for one of the Society to gain access to Mount Olympus than for anyone else.

WHY THE SOCIETY OF THE LION?

Choose the Society of the Lion for adventures centered on investigation, protection, or conflict with corrupt powers. These areas are where the Society shines and where they expend their greatest efforts. The Society of the Lion is also ideal for games set on and around Mount Olympus. If you want to tell stories at the epicenter of this epic age, the Society of the Lion is in a perfect position to do so. These are the heroes of the day, using their power to protect others and build a better tomorrow.

THE NAUTIKOI

FEAR NO DRAGON.

HISTORY

Electra took her younger brother Orestes from the city of Argos to save him from her murderous stepfather, Aegisthus. Leaving the boy with King Strophius of Phocis, Electra wandered the world in search of purpose. She soon fell in love with travel, seeing new vistas and distant lands. The beauty she found in the unknown acted as a balm for her grief at her father's death. Yet, the true joy of discovery eluded her, always dampened by her unresolved hatred of her treacherous mother and stepfather. Thus, she swore vengeance and returned to Argos by way of Athens. As though fate had arranged it, she arrived at the same time as her brother. Reunited at last, the pair exacted their revenge.

As Argos celebrated long-delayed royal justice, a fireball lit the sky above.

Across the sea, a fragment broken loose from the fireball smashed into the wall of a Lycian town. There, the great architect and inventor Daedalus foraged ambrosia from the impact. His mind alight with the possibilities, he knew he could use the strange material to craft wonders that rivaled his legendary wings. Seeking more information, he traveled to Argos, where he found the city in a stir. Electra was eager to set out again. She'd placed a call for any citizen with a thirst for adventure, exploration, or knowledge to join her on a journey to discover the fireball's nature. She particularly wanted those with seafaring experience, knowledge of medicine, and scribes. Seizing the opportunity to put greater distance between himself and Crete, which still held painful memories of his lost son, Daedalus joined the expedition.

By the time Electra and her newly established Nautikoi arrived at Mount Olympus, the explorers who would become the Society of the Lion had already begun their efforts to safeguard the mountain's ambrosia pools. When Electra and Daedalus arrived, Pythia recognized Electra from her visions and could plainly see the power flowing through Daedalus. Sharing these insights with the other explorers, Pythia declared the new arrivals trustworthy. This initial meeting formed the basis for the strong alliance between the Society of the Lion, the Delphic League, and the Nautikoi to this day.

Though their membership has since expanded considerably, those Argives who joined Electra on the expedition to Mount Olympus as the first of the Nautikoi hold honored positions in its hierarchy. The journey opened up an entire new world to these explorers and they swore to make the most of it, not only by heading off on their own journeys, but also by encouraging and mentoring new explorers. The Argive admirals listen for tales of far-off places and legendary treasures — such as islands inhabited by sea witches, a sun-god's stolen chariot, the dead rising from frozen ground — and direct captains and crews to set sail and discover.

Electra continues her duties as the organization's high admiral. When she's at the Olympus chapter

house or visiting a port that's home to other Nautikoi, she lends her advice to new captains. She can often be seen in the crowd when a new expedition launches.

Recruitment

The Nautikoi court scholars, scribes, seafarers, and all manner of explorers for membership in their College. While this represents the bulk of their roster, anyone with the spark of curiosity and the courage to explore is welcome in their ranks. Though specialization is welcome in the group, it's hardly a requirement. Nautikoi joyfully seek out the unknown, whether that be an uncharted island far to the west, a mysterious cave inhabited by strange creatures never before seen by human eyes, or an unencountered culture living beyond the borders of known society.

The success of their expeditions and epic adventures are the Nautikoi's best recruiting tool. When a crew returns triumphantly to port, telling tales of what they've seen and where they're setting sail for next, would-be sailors present themselves at the docks soon after. Captains and crew members do well to ensure that new deckhands understand what they're signing up for before the ship pulls up anchor. The work is hard and often dangerous. They're as likely to run into sudden storms, sea monsters, and pirates as they are to find tranquil coves and golden fleeces. Anyone who'd rather stay on land or return to the comforts of home is welcome to do so. Those who remain are put to work straight away.

Nautikoi are quick to make friends, and quick to welcome new members. Many prospective Nautikoi don't remain with the College for long. These short-term members either find that their passion for the unknown doesn't reach the levels of their comrades,

or that their curiosity is sated after solving the mystery that brought them in contact with the College in the first place. The Nautikoi don't seem to mind this turnover and often consider members who leave in such circumstances allies and friends long after parting ways. Some continue to lend their skills to the College from the safety of home. Mapmakers and librarians are always needed on Mount Olympus for those who prefer quieter work, while other former Nautikoi might become bodyguards for travelers venturing along hazardous roads. Craftspeople offer their skills building and repairing ships or designing new vehicles to aid in exploration.

Those who remain beyond their first expedition are typically Nautikoi for life. Whether they're career sailors or captains of their own ships, the spark of discovery drives them ever onward.

Organization and Structure

Nautikoi scatter themselves far and wide, passing along communications as they run into one another abroad. Allies and friends across the map — especially along the coasts — often hold messages or supplies for this ship or that band of explorers. The closest thing the Nautikoi have to headquarters is their chapter house at Mount Olympus. This has become a central storage house for many artifacts and unusual items Nautikoi explorers find in the wild. The chapter house also contains one of the most extensive map collections in Europe. Members are expected — though not required — to share their maps with Nautikoi scribes while visiting the chapter house.

The Nautikoi adhere to a naval command structure, no matter the nature of their expeditions. Admiral Electra is the leader of the College, though her standing orders amount to a command to "get out there and explore!" Her inner circle, those original crewmembers who everyone simply calls the Argives, recommend voyages for certain crews to undertake, but rarely does such a recommendation become a direct order. Still, the Nautikoi take the Argives' suggestions under serious consideration. Not only are they seasoned explorers matching quests to the crews best equipped to undertake them, at least one of the Argives is an Oracle, which lends extra weight to their advice.

For the most part the command structure manifests most clearly at the expedition level. Each expedition has a captain in charge, and a crew under their command. The ranks of the crew members largely depend on the nature and size of the expedition. Some expeditions have only a captain and a party of ensigns, the rank given to the newest members of the College. Larger expeditions have a chain of command with lieutenants giving orders to ensigns and answering to commanders, with ship-based expeditions naturally bearing the largest crews. A handful of Nautikoi prefer to travel solo, or lend their skills to groups composed of other Colleges' members.

In addition to prospective or first-time explorers, Nautikoi sometimes bring civilian passengers on their journeys. No small portion of the College's financing comes from fares charged to tagalongs dropped off en route to a destination. These civilians — also called bystanders, passengers, or cargo by some members — receive the same privileges and treatment as ensigns in all matters but those of safety or combat. When danger is afoot, the Nautikoi in charge of a voyage take great pains to shield anyone along for the ride from the worst of the risk.

Goals and Methods

The primary goal of the Nautikoi is to foster discovery. There are some, Admiral Electra in particular, who hope to see a detailed map of the entire world completed in their lifetimes. Others among the Nautikoi think such a goal is unattainable, claiming there will always be a new horizon to strive toward. For these Nautikoi, the joy is in the journey. Discovery is a process they relish. As far as they're concerned there will always be a map's edge warning of dragons and beckoning the Nautikoi soul.

The majority of Nautikoi financing comes from passenger fares. Electra has a small private fortune at her disposal, and members who follow in Daedalus' footsteps often sell their services as craftspeople if the need arises. Because the Nautikoi travel anywhere they can, they often establish friendly relations in numerous stops throughout the known world and beyond.

Nautikoi thrive on discovery. Boldly going into the unknown, the Nautikoi never pass up an opportunity to explore a mysterious cave, step through a glowing faerie ring, or ride some untested vehicle into the sky or sea. Inspired by Daedalus and the pursuit of perfection in their crafts, the tradesfolk

and craftspeople among the Nautikoi instruct one another, creating a vast repository of shared knowledge. As a result, many Nautikoi are expert craftspeople, relying on vehicles and conveyances of their own design when delving into the unknown. From airships to deep sea diving helms to wheeled sandals and wax wings, Nautikoi exhibit great ingenuity when contriving means of travel.

ADVANTAGES

The greatest advantage members of the Nautikoi enjoy is their access to vehicles and technology. One of the premier craftspeople of the era is not only a member of the organization, but he sometimes trains those who seek him out, provided they show great potential. High quality equipment is a boon when one faces down the unknown. If a Nautikos can't make something, they likely know someone who can.

In addition to quality gear, the Nautikoi are known far and wide as good, honest, and reliable. They make friends wherever they drop anchor. In their eyes, when you're out on the edge of the world, the closer your nearest friend is, the better. Nautikoi keep track of hostile areas as well, ensuring they don't run into a potential enemy while returning from a long journey.

WHY THE NAUTIKOI?

Electra's call to the people of Argos when the sky chariot fell is a perfect answer to this question. If you have a taste for adventure, exploration, or knowledge, the Nautikoi are perfect for you. The Nautikoi are an ideal choice if you want to travel the world and beyond, into bizarre other worlds and parallel dimensions. If you like creating super-science vehicles and other tools of exploration or investigation, you may enjoy the Nautikoi as well. Gadgeteers, cartographers, explorers, and those who love to meet and study new cultures or creatures are all good choices for Nautikoi characters.

THE DELPHIC LEAGUE

SIGHT DEMANDS ACTION.

HISTORY

Pythia, high priestess at the temple in Delphi, had a vision of a fireball hurtling through the sky and crashing into Mount Olympus. The vision seemed so tangible and true that she took a pilgrimage to the mountain in the hopes of unlocking the mystery for herself. The moment she arrived at the base of the mountain, the sky screamed. As she looked up, the air turned to fire and a blast shook the world. Golden fire rained around her, but she wasn't burned. All moments became a single moment in Pythia's mind's eye. She understood that her own oracular gifts resulted from this event, even though they'd already manifested long before. She had a vision of great heroes who would rise in the coming age, and of the monsters they'd stand against. She learned of ambrosia, and of those explorers who would form the Society of the Lion once they realized the scope of what had happened.

The world would need guidance.

Taking a small batch of ambrosia with her, Pythia returned to her temple. Relying on the insight and visions it granted, she began looking for others who'd felt fate's kiss. Many of those initial sessions led her to other seers, practitioners of the arcane, and masters of alchemical and astrological study. Taking this as a sign within a sign, Pythia established the Delphic League to serve as a network of oracles to shepherd in the new age. She invited the first dozen fate-touched she found, and all came to the temple to answer the call. She divided her ambrosia among them and sent eleven into the world to seek others like themselves and bring them back to Delphi. The twelfth, an alchemist named Hermes, she sent to Mount Olympus to speak to the Society of the Lion on behalf of the Delphics.

Pythia proposed an alliance in which she and her seers would help the Society of the Lion find ambrosia beyond the slopes of Olympus in exchange for access to the sources there. The nascent Society of the Lion, in need of friendly allies — and hardly ignorant of the Oracle of Delphi's legendary prophetic powers — agreed to Pythia's terms. Soon thereafter, the Delphics began construction of their first chapter house at Olympus.

RECRUITMENT

The Delphic League seeks Inspired who command arcane forces, master forbidden or esoteric lore, and possess wisdom, insight, or visions. They have a reputation as seers and prophets, but also as witches and evil warlocks who twist the weather against their enemies and lay curses on those who earn their disfavor. These rumors, while grossly exaggerated, also aren't wholly false. The Delphics command massive

mystic might and aren't shy about using it, though they're more likely to curse a person coming to them looking for vengeful magics than the would-be customer's intended target. Pythia is a pragmatist, but she's not immoral. She won't tolerate cruel or abusive members among her League.

For someone accustomed to speaking in riddles, Pythia is clear about the expectations she holds for the organization. She knows a new heroic age dawned with the starfall, and she sees the Delphics as a necessary tool in nudging those heroes in the right direction. Even with her remarkable insight, there are too many variables, and frankly too many Olympians, Oracles, and Champions, running about for her to rest on her laurels. Any one of the Inspired could change the course of the world for the worse. Thus, the Delphic League watches and intervenes as the greater good requires.

Organization and Structure

Pythia is the ultimate authority in the Delphic League. While she relies heavily on her advisory council — those initial twelve seers she reached out to upon her return from Olympus — she makes all final decisions. Few question the Oracle of Delphi's wisdom, but none question her authority within the League. Those who do tend to move on to other Colleges quickly. Pythia encourages members to share their thoughts and perspectives. She values their counsel and shies away from making decrees. However, when she exerts her authority, she expects that to be the end of the matter and her word considered final. A member who continually pushes her limits risks being denied further access to the group's resources and ostracized.

Despite her firm grasp on the Society, Pythia isn't authoritarian or stifling. Many times, the opposite is true. This can prove frustrating to those who seek her guidance within the League. When asked to weigh in on a particular conundrum, Pythia is as likely to smile and assure the Delphic that she trusts their judgment as she is to dispense any directives or even advice. Pythia doesn't want automatons; she needs quick thinking, problem-solving, wise leaders who can handle the responsibility of stewarding godly beings. Those who lean too heavily on the League for aid may find it temporarily withdrawn, forcing them to solve problems on their own and rely on their own resourcefulness.

Yet, when Pythia sees a need, she eagerly mobilizes the Delphics to action. Whether sending a group of Delphics to assist a Nautikoi expedition, to act as support for a Society of the Lion investigation, or to stand against the excesses of the Order of the Titans, Pythia is happy to extend whatever backup she can, so long as she believes this help is needed.

Thanks to their arrangement with the Society of the Lion, any member of the Delphic League in good standing can access the pools of ambrosia on Mount Olympus, as long as they are accompanied by one of the Delphics who lives at the Olympus chapter house.

Goals and Methods

The Delphic League seeks to guide this nascent age of heroes to a better and more just world. They rely on powerful alliances and magic to achieve these goals. The organization boasts the largest collection of Oracles in the world, though they also count several Champions and a few Olympians among their number. Pythia expects all members to maintain conversant knowledge of the arcane and the strange to ensure they're properly equipped when encountering the unnatural in the field.

As Pythia's duties at her temple keep her largely confined to Delphi, she leans heavily on the Society to handle concerns beyond the temple walls. The last time she left the temple for any extended period was to make her pilgrimage to Olympus. Getting her away from the temple again would require another event of similar significance. Instead, Pythia directs the League from within, relying on psychic means and mystic methods to communicate her directives to Delphics in the field.

However, few Delphics wait for directives from on high. Guided by their own adventures, investigations, and visions, the Delphic League works across the world to help steer the heroes of the age true and protect those who would be helpless against monsters, villains, and corrupt officials. In this work, their alliances with the Society of the Lion and the Nautikoi prove indispensable. The Society of the Lion provides insight, knowledge, and might while the Nautikoi provide transportation and mechanical support. Given the breadth of resources at their disposal, there is little this trinity cannot accomplish should they commit their united effort to it.

Advantages

In addition to access to ambrosia, members of the Delphic League can receive training from some of the most learned scholars, seers, and alchemists in the known world. Those seeking to improve their understanding of fields mundane and mystic find ample tutelage under the Delphic banner. Furthermore, the utility of access to an interconnected network of prophets and seers can't be overstated. When a Delphic suspects a person, place, or item has been touched by fate, their suspicions are easy to verify through their own Gifts or those of a colleague.

Delphics are respected and feared wherever they're known. Commoner and king alike tremble at the power of Oracles, and that an army of them works in tandem is terrifying to those with dark hearts or guilty minds. If not for Pythia's reputation — and the long list of kings and heroes who rely on her advice — fear would surely have turned into violence toward the League. But most people, at least in the Mediterranean, know better than to provoke the Delphics and their allies.

Finally, the Delphic League shares equal presence with the Nautikoi and the Society of the Lion at Mount Olympus. They are one of the few organizations with relatively unfettered access to the ambrosia pools on Olympus, granting them a reliable, steady, and safe source of the miracle substance.

Why the Delphic League?

Delphics play an important role in shaping a kingdom's fate, guiding an army to success, or a village to prosperity. While outsiders view the Delphics as powerful and dangerous magicians, the people they advise trust their wisdom

and experience. Players who enjoy showy — and sometimes frightening — displays of Inspired power might enjoy creating a Delphic character. Alternatively, a Delphic might be cautious with their power to avoid scaring those they interact with, deploying their powers in more subtle ways. Or your character may be a reluctant protector of ignorant mortals who fear them, doing good deeds even while the people they help shy away from the witch — it's a thankless job, but if you don't do it, who will?

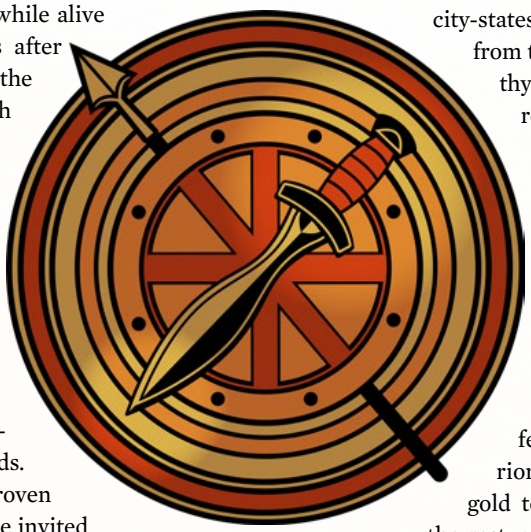
Going beyond their reputation, the Delphics command great might. Their powers are fantastical in the purest sense. If you like flashy effects, tossing spells around, and displaying your mystic might, you'll enjoy playing a Delphic.

Circle of Heroes

Memory is Immortality.

History

Heroes, people who do acts worthy of being venerated, are lauded while alive and remembered for ages after they find their peace in the Fields of Elysium. Through strength of arms, cleverness of wit, and stalwartness of courage, members of the Circle of Heroes earn their titles long before they are given their first taste of ambrosia. The College believes that one must be great before they are blessed with the nectar of the gods. Only once a person has proven their dedication can they be invited to join the Circle and seek the greater acclaim awaiting them.



Circle members seek their immortality through acts of valor and bravery, taking on tasks worthy of song and legend. Heracles didn't stop with killing the Nemean Lion; he went on to slay the Hydra, and the Stymphalian birds, captured bulls and boars, and stole all manner of precious items from monsters and goddesses, and more besides. Achilles wasn't simply a fierce warrior, he was so deadly the gods themselves had to restrain him as he raged over dead Patroclus. Both Heracles and Achilles sailed with Jason and his Argonauts on their many adventures. The Circle of Heroes look to their stories as inspiration, demanding the same degree of courage from any who wish to join their ranks.

This doesn't mean that every would-be Hero has to undertake twelve impossible labors before they can join. Those who defend their homes and city-states from predation — whether from tyrants or titans — is a worthy enough task. They may root out ambrosia-twisted monsters and slay them, largely in single combat. Others still prove their worth through feats of cunning and cleverness, as Theseus and his solution to conquering the Minotaur's labyrinth.

When the sky chariot fell, a group of Theban warriors followed a trail of blazing gold to where it broke off from the rest, and discovered a small pool of ambrosia at the site of its impact. The first to drink gained the power of prophecy. With the taste of ambrosia still on her tongue, the Oracle told her companions what she'd seen: all would receive powerful gifts and tales of their deeds would outlive them, but some of their names would be spoken with horror and dread in years to come. Each vowed they'd fight against such a fate before they drank, and for a time they held true to their convictions. Long enough, at least, to establish the Circle of Heroes and set examples for those who followed.

After finding their first amphora of ambrosia, some of the first generation of heroes were not as worthy as their peers would have hoped. Just as the Oracle warned, they became the very tyrants and monsters they'd set out to defeat. It was this tragedy that

prompted the stance the Circle takes to this day: to join the Circle, you must prove your valor and your value. Over the last few years, the Circle's leaders — with the guidance of the Oracle Iaera — determined the methods for vetting potential new members. By demanding that hopefuls demonstrate their virtues and valor by pushing their mortal minds and bodies to the limit, they hoped to winnow the list to only the most worthy. It's not an entirely foolproof process, though it's largely effective.

With their numbers constrained by the momentous strides new members must make to be considered and how often they die in the line of duty, the Circle of Heroes may be the smallest College to have been formed after the crash. Yet they are mighty. There has yet to be a threat large enough to bring the whole Circle to bear, but it is only a matter of time before the world's most legendary heroes are all together brought to confront something even the likes of Heracles or Achilles can't defeat alone.

Recruitment

Each Dáskalos — leaders of the local Circle — keeps an ear to the ground for the tales of feats that would signal a Hero in the making. More often than not, would-be heroes come to them first, referring to their own achievements. Each of these must bring with them at least three people who would attest, on pain of death, that they bore witness to these acts and speak in good favor for the person's character. Then, the Hero must pass a test, which is always related to whatever would make them a Hero. Those who haven't yet received ambrosia must out-wrestle the strongest of the Circle if they are strong, out-debate the most silver-tongued orator, or outwit the wisest sage. Some deem it unfair, asking normal mortals to defeat Champions in this way, but the Circle's leaders insist that they'll find a way if they're fated to join.

Recruits who have already been exposed to ambrosia must also find people to vouch for them, though their ensuing tasks are far more difficult. These are often labors that are in line with

the Circle's immediate goals: killing a monster that's terrorizing a nearby village, tricking a river serpent into letting ships pass, or casting their thoughts into the future and advising on what they see. These acts don't always require personal sacrifice, but the Circle looks poorly upon those who balk at danger.

Sometimes, a Dáskalos approaches a potential member first. One way to gain their notice is to dispatch with one whom the Circle deems unworthy. Many of the Circle's Heroes have claimed the mantle by felling someone already so blessed, but who did not adhere to the ethics of true heroes.

Heroes are those who want to make their mark on the world, to change the world, to be remembered. Often, this attracts the wrong sort of person — those who would become tyrants, monsters, and villains if given the blessing. Some hide their darkness for long enough to sneak past their Dáskalos, but most are denied ambrosia and turned away. Those who pass the trials and gain the blessings of the Hero are those who would step into the path of a rampaging titan or jump after a sailor who fell overboard. While Oracles of great skill can pass their test to join the Circle, and while an Olympian or two has graced the group with their aid, the majority of Heroes are Champions.

Organization and Structure

Every city-state from Athens to Sparta houses a Temenos, a headquarters of the Circle that serves both as a sanctuary for living Heroes and a mausoleum for the dead. Each Temenos has a Dáskalos, a teacher, who leads the Temenos and is the ultimate judge of who is worthy to receive their ambrosia. A Dáskalos has access to enough ambrosia to create ten heroes at a time, though the College's strict standards mean that most initiation ceremonies only welcome one new member.

A Temenos is formed when a city-state or large enough village has ten Heroes move into it, or assigned to them by the Inner Circle, the collection of the extant Daskálous (the plural of Dáskalos). One of the ten is elected to be the new Temenos' Dáskalos, and when they retire or die, a new one is elected. Whenever a Hero falls, if possible, their body is entombed in the Temenos closest to where they were born, where their monument is a shrine to their life, all they did, and the victories they earned. Circle members are encouraged to visit the tombs and ponder the fallen Hero's deeds and learn from both their triumphs and mistakes.

The Circle of Heroes keeps no permanent base of operations, but the Inner Circle do meet at the Spring of Heroes at the foot of Olympus in a deep cave, where they draw their ambrosia from the ground. At these meetings they refill their stores of ambrosia and assess the needs of the Circle on the whole. Each Dáskalos has complete control over their respective Temenos, but if their leadership lets too many would-be titans imbibe the precious liquid, another may challenge them to combat. The loser is stripped of their title, and usually their life.

Goals and Methods

The Circle of Heroes exists to give people a shot at what only gods can rest assured of: immortality. Through great deeds and actions, a Hero can live in the hearts and minds of others for much longer than their actual lifespan. Be that by being a great and just ruler, a warrior worthy of song, or a slayer of titans, Heroes aim to become exalted and worthy of worship among other mere mortals. They do this by always being willing to throw themselves at a problem. Might, speed, or wits — whatever the Hero specializes in, they keep an ear to the ground in search of opportunities to handle issues for their wider community.

Though the Dáskalous encourage Heroes to acts of sacrifice and selflessness, members who desire acclaim and immortality aren't reprimanded for wanting those things. If you want to be the best, to be so good that potters will paint your deeds onto urns, you have to be willing to work for it. Too much ego can be a dangerous thing, but a degree of ambition and competition among Heroes can yield positive results.

To this end, two groups stand in their path looking to subvert their goals, one from within, the other from without. From outside the group stands the Order of Titans. Some believe that it is the sole goal of the Circle to wipe out these Olympians who would use their powers to subjugate others. While this is not wholly untrue, as defeating a Titan is almost always a feat worthy of joining the ranks of Heroes, it is not all that the Circle cares about.

The other group doesn't have a name, as the Circle refuse to refer to them by any name that might enter into the annals of history. These are fallen Heroes,

those who end up corrupted by power and use their abilities given to them by the Circle for malicious ends. These, while not usually as monstrous or actively dangerous as Titans, pose a larger threat to the Circle, as they know their secrets. More than once, a former Dáskalos used their knowledge of the inner workings of the Circle to betray their peers, committing terrible crimes until they were stopped by their former allies.

Advantages

The Circle of Heroes think of themselves as a large family. They look after one another and always answer another Hero's call for aid. After all, which stories get remembered better than those where more than one Hero joins forces to combat a threat together? If any one of them is capable of feats that will be remembered in poetry and song, then that chance is multiplied exponentially the more of them congregate to accomplish whatever the goal is.

Furthermore, Heroes are the best of the best that humanity can offer, only the gods themselves can best them. Their brand and reason for existence is excellence. They offer strength of arms, valor of the heart, and sharpness of the mind to whatever problems any member may have. In any town or city-state, members of the Circle always have a home, sanctuary, and allies when there is a Temenos nearby.

Why the Circle of Heroes?

You'd want to join the Circle if your character longs to be immortalized in stories. This can be a goal that your character has from the start of the game that they haven't accomplished yet, and the deeds your character accomplishes in the game prove their worthiness to join. Conversely, your character could already be a Hero, with a few heroic acts under her belt. Your group can go up against a terrifying titan, or take down a fallen Hero who uses their acclaim and powers for selfish and dark deeds. Perhaps even, if the whole group is composed of Heroes, they can establish their own Temenos and function as the Heroes for the local settlement of wherever they are, especially if they are outside of Greece herself.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF ĀŠIPU

IDENTIFY, RECTIFY, INDEMNIFY.

HISTORY

For hundreds of years, the city of Assur has fostered advanced learning in the realms of mathematics and medicine, and in the arts of exorcism and divination. These practices are inextricably connected in Assyrian culture. Wealthy and privileged students pursue these arts seeking their place among the influential āšipu (pronounced ah-shih-pu) social class. Many āšipu serve as advisors to nobles and the wealthy, act as healers throughout the land, and travel around to put the dead to rest. Their social influence is unparalleled in Assyria, which they use to further the goals of the Empire and ensure they remain firmly in control of the royal advisors.

The Fellowship of Āšipu traces its true beginnings to the sky chariot's fall. On that fateful day, a group of the king's advisors met on a palace balcony. When a piece of the sky chariot flew overhead, a cloud of ambrosia blew onto the balcony, imbuing those advisers with immense power. That group founded the Fellowship of Āšipu to learn as much as they could about this phenomenon and the world at large, and to pursue that scholarship while expanding the glory and influence of the Assyrian Empire.

Drawing on a long-established network of apprentices, the founders dispatched Āšipu to various sites to investigate the strange phenomenon they'd

THE SECRET OF THE ĀŠIPU AND AMBROSIA

While the ambrosia sought the Āšipu in unmistakably higher numbers than anyone else in the region, no scholar seems to know why or how this happened. This can be an interesting mystery to pursue at your table. Perhaps you decide that some consciousness guided the ambrosia to the Āšipu for a particular reason. Perhaps there's some secret buried in Assyrian history that places the Āšipu in a position to have a significant impact on the known world. It's up to you.

witnessed. Of those who responded, the majority encountered ambrosia, gaining strange powers of their own. Some even claimed that it was as though the ambrosia called out to them while others described being washed over by a wave of the otherworldly nectar. While most of the Āšipu accept this bizarre occurrence as further evidence of their own excellence, there are some among the College who still labor to determine the cause of this initial reaction between Āšipu and ambrosia.

RECRUITMENT

A larger than average number of Inspired Āšipu were chosen by ambrosia upon their contact with the substance. Whether they were studying a sample in a workshop or merely passing by an open source of the food of the gods, the nearby ambrosia surged to life, targeting the Āšipu. While this peculiarity interests the Society of the Lion and the Delphic League, to the Āšipu, it simply makes sense. Of course, the ambrosia chooses them — their studies all but guarantee their worth to wield its power.

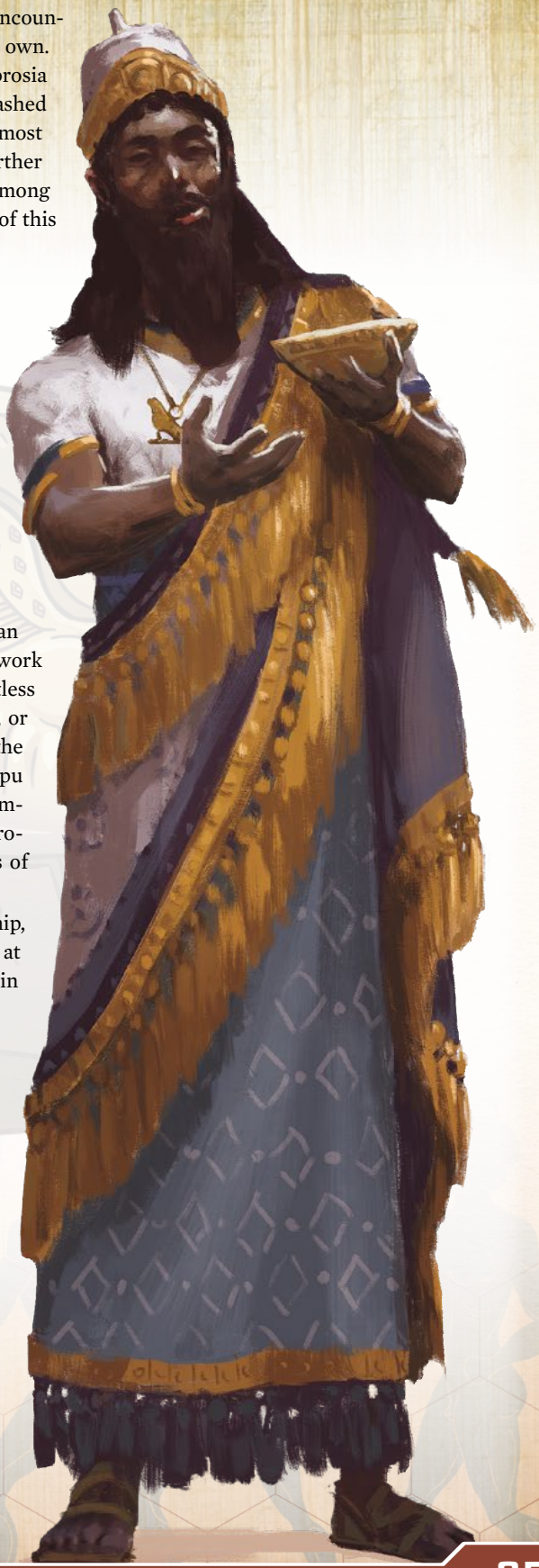
Though most Āšipu recruits come from Assyrian society, the College has room for anyone willing to work as a healer, exorcise demons, or help place the restless dead back in their graves. Nation of origin, gender, or religious beliefs matter little to the Āšipu so long as the recruit willingly places their duty above all else. Āšipu serve as apprentices and interns for established members of the College until they can exhibit the appropriate medical and spiritual proficiency, regardless of whether they've tasted ambrosia.

Once an Āšipu completes their apprenticeship, they're expected to mentor at least one apprentice at all times. Many maintain two to five apprentices in varying states of mastery.

ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

The Āšipu maintain master-apprentice relationships throughout their lifetimes regardless of distance or time. Even if an apprentice travels to distant shores, regular communication via messenger is common. This means news travels fast among the Fellowship. Information of interest passes along apprentice to master until making it back to the high court of Assur, where the College leadership resides.

There are few dictates from the leadership. Members are expected to learn all they can about the world. While that certainly includes unlocking



the mysteries of ambrosia, it isn't their only area of interest. The Fellowship of Āšipu study the world in all its glory, from the scariest ambrosia-spawned monstrosity to the peaceful rhythms of the tides, Āšipu seek to understand how the world works.

With its emphasis on individual discovery combined with the prevalence and tightness of the master- apprentice bond, the Fellowship's day-to-day concerns aren't always a priority for the members. One's studies are more important than Fellowship politics, and take precedence over requests from home. However, if the elders make a request and it doesn't place undue burden on one's research, members are expected to comply. Masters have more power within the organization, so while they can ignore or put off requests with little repercussion, they recognize that their apprentices can't. They use their own influence and authority to take the heat off apprentices who can't drop everything. Few masters allow their apprentices to suffer the embarrassment of such scandal. Most of the time if an Āšipu doesn't have a good excuse for ignoring a request from the elders, their master will make one up for them.

Not that the Āšipu are insubordinate or lazy. Quite the opposite is true. They're often a busy, otherwise occupied, and somewhat obsessive lot. When pursuing a mystery or solving an enigma, an interruption from Assur is little more than an annoying distraction. Those with the luxury of doing so pass such requests for aid or action to their apprentices and so on until someone either handles it, or the request falls through the cracks unfulfilled.

Goals and Methods

A grand schism separates the leadership of the Āšipu from the regular members. Those who serve in the high courts of Assur wish to use the Fellowship's knowledge and power to expand the Assyrian Empire and assure it stands against all comers. The further from the gates of Assur one travels, the less important that goal becomes to Āšipu one meets. The majority of the Fellowship sees themselves as healers, exorcists, and scholars. They have little care for politics unless those politics interfere with their studies. This has earned the Fellowship's leaders a reputation as cold and flippant toward the well-being of others, especially the lower social strata. While on an organizational level this is true, most individual Āšipu care very much for people from all levels of society. They are, after all, healers.

The Fellowship's daily operations focus on studying phenomena both natural and supernatural. When their travels bring them in contact with the sick or wounded, the Āšipu happily pause their quest for knowledge to tend those in need. When a member of the Fellowship sets up in a location, be it for a day or for a decade, they frequently spread the word of their healing skill and their willingness to aid with any infection or possession, for a price.

The matter of payment is another place where individual Āšipu vary drastically. Every member of the College claims to charge a "nominal fee." For some this means charging only those who can afford it. For others it means refusing service for anything less than the required amount. Some drastically overcharge the wealthy while refusing to charge common folk and slaves. However, in a true life or death emergency, few among the Fellowship of the Āšipu would refuse a patient comfort and healing for any reason.

Advantages

One of the greatest benefits of membership in the Fellowship of Āšipu is one's relationship with their mentor (often represented as dots in the Patron Edge, **Trinity Continuum Core** p. 61). Āšipu draw on this relationship throughout their entire lives, turning to their mentor for support, instruction, and resources. This bond is the backbone of the Fellowship.

The closer one gets to the city of Assur the more their status in the Fellowship matters in terms of social standing and clout. Within the city, the Āšipu are treated with the same deference and respect as nobility. When traveling through the outer reaches of the Empire, the Āšipu are respected, but within Assur itself, they're venerated.

Beyond Assyria, the Āšipu can typically expect the same treatment any other scholar would receive. However, when dealing with the other Colleges, the Fellowship faces some prejudice. The Society of the Lion and the Delphics don't trust the Āšipu due to their ties to the Assyrian Empire. The Nautikoi are warmer to them, but the Nautikoi are warm to everyone. Still, the Āšipu are tolerated guests at Mount Olympus because of their scholarly pursuits, and in the end, that's all that matters to them.

Why the Fellowship of Āšipu?

The Fellowship is unusual among the major Colleges in that it possesses a long, rich, and storied

history, rivaled only by that of the Scribes of the Shell. If you want to tell stories about an established organization with hundreds of years of experience and archives to draw from, the Fellowship of Āšipu is perfect for you. Stories involving the Fellowship can center on this established group of scholars trying to come to terms with the changes ambrosia has inflicted upon the world while hunting spirits and curing strange maladies. Reconciling centuries of scholarship against the new discoveries brought by the discovery of ambrosia can make for a compelling tale as the Āšipu's adherence to tradition conflicts with new knowledge and threats. They're also skilled healers, so if you have an interest in filling that role in a party involving multiple Colleges, the Āšipu are a solid choice.

MASTERS OF COLCHIS

TOOLS OF THE HAND ARE TOOLS OF THE WILL.

HISTORY

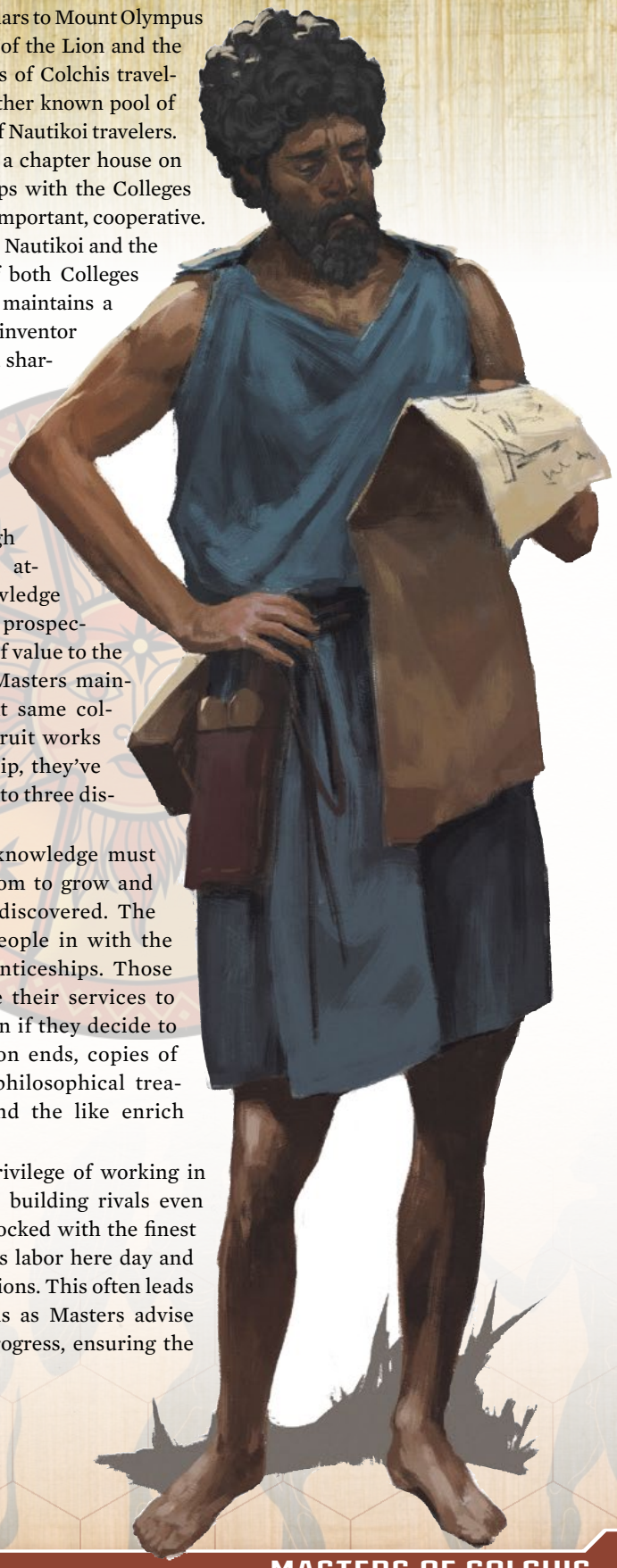
In the years before the sky chariot fell, Queen Medea of Colchis was already an accomplished engineer and magician, renowned throughout her lands for her wisdom and prowess. When a fragment of the chariot landed near Colchis, Medea personally led the investigation to track it down and discover its secrets. As a descendant of Helios, she felt she'd be the only person in the city who could hope to approach the crash safely. When she arrived at the crash site and saw the wreckage still burning, Medea bade her guard to stay behind while she approached. As she grew closer, she inhaled the vapors of ambrosia that lent the air a golden glow. Though she was alarmed at first, she soon grew calm. Great magical powers awakened within her; she thought she might be able to call the sun down from the sky if she so desired, and perhaps ask Helios some questions, though she refrained lest she burn her guards and all of Colchis to ash.

At first, she was wary of allowing others near the substance, not out of greed but concern. She was certain this was no fragment from Helios's chariot, but she still feared what might happen to others if exposed. Medea ordered armed guards posted at the site at all hours. During the second visit, Medea's advisor, Tisander, approached too closely while Medea examined the ambrosia, which had by now settled into a tranquil pool. Fluid split off from the larger pool, crawled along the earth, and climbed into Tisander's mouth. When the formerly meek but wise advisor transformed into a confident man with the body of Adonis and the ability to fly, Medea determined the ambrosia wasn't dangerous after all. At least, not in the way she thought.

Collecting the ambrosia and bringing it to her workshop in the heart of Colchis, Medea resolved to unlock its secrets and use its power to improve lives throughout the region she ruled. She sent messengers to every corner of the known world calling for scholars, craftspeople, and students of magic to help unravel the mysteries of the nectar of the gods. The first to arrive became the founding members of the Masters of Colchis.

Since then, Medea and her followers have studied the substance extensively, and benefitted from the gifts it bestows. Their work has produced wonders beyond the wildest imaginations in Greece, some of which are becoming not only commonplace advancements among the people of Colchis, but a source of great wealth for the nation. Scaffolding appears throughout the city as architects design towers to study the sky or inventors direct teams in building a massive mechanical defender to stand guard over the gates.

The Masters routinely send scholars to Mount Olympus to share findings with the Society of the Lion and the Delphic League. Typically, Masters of Colchis traveling to Mount Olympus — or any other known pool of ambrosia — do so in the company of Nautikoi travelers. While the Masters don't maintain a chapter house on Mount Olympus, their relationships with the Colleges there are warm, cordial, and most important, cooperative. They form the closest ties with the Nautikoi and the Fellowship of Āšipu. Members of both Colleges are Medea's frequent guests. She maintains a regular correspondence with the inventor Daedalus, exchanging theories and sharing designs for review.



RECRUITMENT

The Masters of Colchis value nothing more than expertise. They seek those who through scholarship or experience have attained the height of skill or knowledge in any arena. The hope is that the prospective recruit can bring something of value to the larger body of information the Masters maintain while gaining access to that same collection. By the time an eager recruit works their way into official membership, they've likely mastered an additional two to three disciplines of study.

The College recognizes that knowledge must be shared and scholars given room to grow and expand on what's already been discovered. The city draws students and craftspeople in with the promise of education and apprenticeships. Those who take advantage of it pledge their services to Colchis for a period of time. Even if they decide to return home after their education ends, copies of the students' scholarly works, philosophical treatises, mathematical formulae and the like enrich Colchis's libraries.

Masters of Colchis have the privilege of working in Medea's workshop. This massive building rivals even the local temples in size and is stocked with the finest tools in the known world. Masters labor here day and night working on their latest creations. This often leads to massive, organic collaborations as Masters advise one another on their works-in-progress, ensuring the highest quality end products.

In addition to exquisitely crafted mundane items, the Masters of Colchis create various artifacts. Between their own power, the ambrosia they command, and their collective knowledge of manufacturing practice, there is little the Masters can't make should they set their minds to it. Many join the College seeking the means to create wonders they can imagine but lack the tools to build.

Organization and Structure

Queen Medea is the absolute leader of the Masters of Colchis and has the final say in who has access to their tools, workshop, and ambrosia supply. While within the workshop, access to resources — and to Medea's time — are determined by seniority, with the eldest members of the group having priority of access. The workshop spans an entire wing of Medea's palace. Its three floors are a constantly bustling den of productivity, but those who spend their time there get comfortable and familiar with the ebbs and flows of activity throughout the day.

Outside the workshop, Medea demands little from the Masters. She expects members of the College to obey just laws, deal honestly and fairly in business, and take no action that brings shame on Colchis. Other than that, members may conduct themselves as they see fit. If a Master violates one of these tenets, Medea has them stricken from the rolls and their access to the workshop revoked.

The College's members are therefore free to pursue independent projects, and many can be found in smaller workshops and laboratories throughout Colchis and its outlying settlements. They oversee small groups of employees and apprentices, and can call upon colleagues when larger projects call for more hands. When the need arises, however, the Masters of Colchis band together to build a wonder on short notice. The supports and mechanism for a great harpoon still sit atop the walls, the reminder of a time a sea monster threatened the port.

Beyond Colchis, the Masters form a scattershot network of allies. Most communication and movement between Masters in the greater world happens with Nautikoi aid. In fact, many Masters of Colchis outside the city can be found working on Nautikoi vessels.

Goals and Methods

Mastery and practice of their chosen craft is the highest aspiration a Master of Colchis can pursue. Many work tirelessly to attain perfection of a skill set before moving on to new interests. As such, many of these craftspeople produce several masterpieces throughout their lives. Some gain such proficiency that a single work from their forge or drafting board can command a small fortune. Using these resources, and the abundant tax coffers provided by Queen Medea, the Masters can finance virtually any undertaking of which they can conceive.

The Masters of Colchis work for the love of their craft, but they are craftspeople by trade as well. They sell their creations to just about anyone who can pay their price, with Medea only refusing to do business with the Order of Titans. Despite Medea's displeasure, members of the Order of the Titans can still acquire work from the Masters of Colchis, either on the secondary market or from a more flexible Master operating outside Colchis.

The Masters of Colchis include mortals, Champions, Oracles, and Olympians among their number, with each expected to use their abilities to hone their craft. As such, super-science is a common tool for members of this College. From enhanced weapons and armor to Medea's Golden Bull, the Masters of Colchis frequently push the boundaries of the possible with their inventions. Other Colleges invite or hire Masters of Colchis to accompany them on their expeditions. Having an inventor along on the journey comes in handy when faced with mysterious contraptions or godlings who spout strange riddles before they'll let anyone pass through their territory. For their part, the Masters enjoy the challenge, and get a chance to test out some of their creations in the field — even better if there's a brave soldier from the Society of the Lion or one of the Circle of Heroes willing to risk injury in the name of science.

Many Masters who travel outside Colchis do so to study feats of engineering, along with ambrosia and those who gain power from the nectar of the gods. Through this study they form alliances and enmities with other Inspired. Sometimes a Master will take young Inspired with a knack for craftwork under their wing. Other times, particularly if they find someone to be wicked or cruel, the Master will sabotage that creator's work, wreaking havoc on their

workshop in the process — but not before they've claimed useful items for their own.

ADVANTAGES

The sheer volume of resources available to the Masters of Colchis is their greatest advantage. Colchis was a wealthy and advanced land before ambrosia awakened the true power within Queen Medea. Now it's an opulent paradise where one can purchase any good imaginable. Members want for little within the city, and enjoy comparatively easy access to expensive or rare materials for their inventions.

The Masters of Colchis are arguably the greatest collection of artisans in the known world, who customarily consult with one another on collaborative projects. A Master stuck without a solution to a pressing problem often looks no further than their nearest colleague to find a solution. Of course, the farther one travels from Colchis, the less practical a solution becomes. Still, they're knowledgeable on a wide range of topics, and most members can find work making repairs and improvements in exchange for a hot meal and a warm bed, even if they're forced to use subpar tools and common materials.

WHY THE MASTERS OF COLCHIS?

The Masters of Colchis focus on making things, whether that's crafting artifacts at Medea's Workshop or jury rigging together emergency supplies on some distant shore with a Nautikoi friend. If you would enjoy playing a gadgeteer, inventor, or someone who solves puzzles and finds unconventional solutions, you'll find lots to love in playing a Master of Colchis.

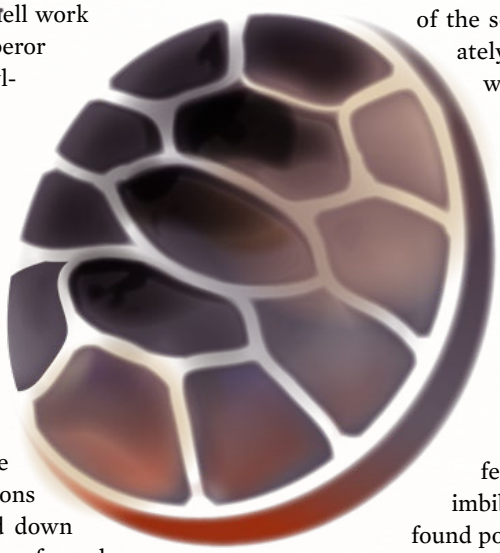
Additionally, the Masters of Colchis earn their title. This can lead some to be arrogant. While others in the group maintain their humility, none stand for insult or challenge to the quality of their work. If the idea of playing someone with immense pride in their craft appeals to you, you might enjoy the Masters.

Scribes of the Shell

Seek Knowledge Wherever It Rests.

History

Hailing from the distant lands of the Shang, the Scribes of the Shell work at the behest of their Emperor to collect all human knowledge to fill the shelves of a great library. When fires lit the western sky, the occurrence perplexed scholars and astrologers. Their star charts and predictions didn't account for such a bombastic phenomenon, and they needed to ensure the manifestation wasn't some dire portent. Though the mathematicians' calculations suggested the fires touched down thousands of miles away, no formulae could predict what threats might follow. Heeding the request of his advisors, the Emperor dispatched dozens of Scribes to determine what happened and what could be learned from the event. The Scribes made their way westward, traveling along established trade routes until arriving at the Mediterranean. Even then, their journeys weren't over. Witnesses said that while most of the starfall happened in Greece, they'd seen other streaks light the sky headed for other places. Intent on their task, the Scribes split up into smaller groups and scattered throughout Europe.



As they traveled, the Scribes encountered those who'd been transformed by ambrosia. This magical substance confounded the Scribes, who believe that its arrival may be some form of error on the part of Heaven's Bureaucracy, or, more likely, they opined that whoever was driving the sky chariot stole ambrosia from the gods. Regardless of the source, the Scribes immediately determined that ambrosia was dangerous. For evidence, they needed only to point to the monster attacks they'd survived, or the wild storms that had whipped up at a traveler's incantation. And yet, they'd seen acts of heroism as well, also driven by ambrosia's effects.

Some Scribes reported feeling a pull or compulsion to imbibe the ambrosia when they found pools of it, while others found the concept repellent. As with many major decisions, the Scribes turned to divination methods — in particular using tortoiseshells and oracle bones — to determine whether they should take the ambrosia. This practice continues still, and each time a member is presented with the opportunity to interact with ambrosia, they consult their divination tools first.

Now that the Scribes of the Shell are dispersed throughout Europe, they've made allies with several of the other Colleges. The Society of the Lion finds their scholarship and insight incredibly useful. The respect the Scribes show for the dangers posed by ambrosia further ingratiates them to these guardians. The Scribes get along well enough with the Nautikoi, though they find them too reckless for long-term cooperation. Still, the explorers

have been eager and helpful guides, and their members have launched expeditions eastward, eager to see the beauty of Shang.

The Scribes have the most in common with the Delphic League and the Masters of Colchis, with whom they freely share notes, information, and findings. A shared love of scholarship builds a firm foundation for this relationship. Though only a few groups of Scribes have encountered members of the Vines of Ilumuqah, their initial contact with this new minor College has been productive. The Vines share a similar mission, gathering knowledge to bring back to their ruler, though their attitudes toward ambrosia differ — where the Scribes caution a conservative approach, the Vines' idea that ambrosia should be for everyone causes a degree of consternation.

However, the Scribes don't necessarily get on with all scholars. There's something of a bitter rivalry between the Scribes of the Shell and the Fellowship of Āšipu. While leadership from neither College comments on the friction, outsiders believe it stems from strained relations between the Assyrian Empire and the Shang.

RECRUITMENT

The Scribes of the Shell rarely recruit from beyond the borders of Shang-controlled lands. On the rare occasion when they do, they seek individuals with a penchant for divination and a strong education. Only those who truly impress a member of this College can hope for recruitment. Such recruits spend years in junior or apprentice positions, as they'll need a lifetime's worth of learning to get up to speed on the Scribes' methods.

What they lack in new blood coming in from Europe, they make up for in their strong, cordial bonds with the other Colleges. The Scribes of the Shell remain acutely aware they are in foreign lands. Building alliances with the locals is a much more productive expenditure of time and energy than trying to recruit locals with incompatible belief structures and incomplete educations.

Maintaining these bonds gains the Scribes access to the libraries groups like the Society of the Lion and the Delphic League maintain on Mount Olympus. When Scribes return to Shang to deliver reports, they do so with their packs laden with carefully copied texts and detailed maps.

Back in Shang lands, recruitment is a lifelong event. The Scribes of the Shell watch scholars from as young as five or six as they display their talent and ability to absorb knowledge. The best among these children are gathered and trained in the arts of astrology, divination, mathematics, and medicine. Those who complete the course with satisfactory performance are welcomed into the Scribes. Recruitment has ramped up since the sky chariot fell, as more groups of Scribes travel to ambrosia sites both in search of information and, if their divinations call for it, to imbibe the substance and use its gifts to further knowledge.

Scribes who are exposed to ambrosia become Champions, Oracles, and Olympians in similar proportions to people in other parts of the world. Oracles among the Scribes tend to have an easier time adjusting to their newfound powers than their counterparts, however. They come to these abilities with a built-in understanding of the burdens and obligations divination places upon a person, which makes Scribe Oracles excellent mentors for their European counterparts.

Organization and Structure

The Scribes of the Shell follow a rigid bureaucratic structure much like the governments — and spirits — from whence they hail. Elder members in Europe act as satraps over various regions where the Scribes operate, with the three largest being Colchis, Athens, and the newly founded Menorca chapter house. The Emperor sends more Scribes to Europe every month as understanding ambrosia's effects and how it can benefit — or threaten — the Empire are imperative to the Emperor. The possibility that ambrosia arrived on earth due to a theft from the gods drives the Emperor's quest to understand and control ambrosia. The Scribes are aware of the Emperor's duties as the highest earthly representative of the Celestial Bureaucracy. They believe the gods will hold the Emperor responsible for any mishandling of the divine substance. As servants of the Empire, it is their sacred duty to keep ambrosia out of nefarious or careless hands.

The satraps send semiannual reports back to the Emperor carved in tortoise shell. Along with these reports they send along any artifacts, rubbings, or other texts of interest collected since the previous dispatch. This forms the second part of the Scribes' mission — to collect and expand the knowledge stored in the Emperor's Grand Library. Often, the Scribes tasked with carrying information back to Shang are Champions and Olympians. Their gifts help them protect their fellow travelers from dangers along the way and — more importantly — helps them safeguard the items and ambrosia returning to Shang along with them.

Groups of Scribes out in the field work together as a unit, though they defer to the Scribe with the most experience when the need arises. This is usually the eldest among them, though if a younger member has been embedded with the Scandian Storm, for example, their advice regarding the dead stirring holds significant weight.

Goals and Methods

The Scribes have a twofold mission in Europe. Their primary goal is to glean understanding of ambrosia and the sky chariot that brought it forth. The Emperor has grave concerns that someone robbed Shangdi and that, if the thief's identity isn't discovered, the High God will grow displeased. As the highest mortal representative of Heaven, the Emperor feels — and fears being held — responsible for uncovering the truth. Therefore, the Scribes place understanding ambrosia and its provenance at the top of their list of priorities.

In addition to their own study, the Scribes collaborate freely with anyone else willing to share their findings. Much to the annoyance of the Society of the Lion, the Scribes have even collaborated on research with the Order of the Titans. The Scribes dutifully remind the Society of their vow not to interfere with imperial research when the subject comes up. The Scribes' views on what constitutes a hero versus a titan tend to differ from the Colleges', which has been a point of tension between them.

Aside from ambrosia, the Scribes of the Shell are tasked with collecting duplicates and rubbings of writings from across the world. This mission may even benefit relationships between the Children of the Mirror and surrounding communities, though the Children's contact with the Scribes is still in its earliest stages. The Emperor

is building what he hopes to be the greatest collection of documents the world has ever seen. He's keenly aware of how big the world is and how little he knows about it. As a faithful servant of Shangdi, the Emperor feels it is his duty to know the world so he might rule justly. This is the foundation for the Scribes' work.

ADVANTAGES

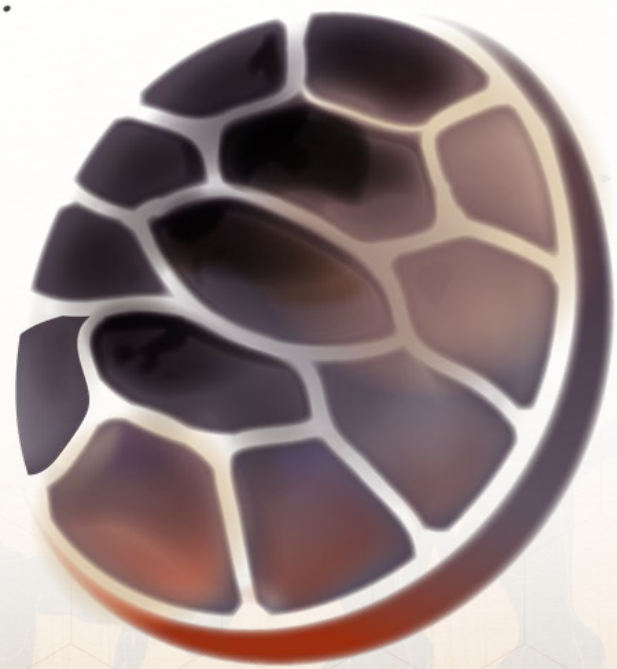
The Scribes of the Shell are highly educated and mostly hail from aristocratic backgrounds. Most members command great personal wealth as a result of their position within the Empire. In lands under Shang rule, the Scribes of the Shell are in the upper crust of the social order. Even in the far reaches of Greece, the Scribes typically command great respect, if absent the appropriate notes of noble deference.

Military leaders and rulers find the Scribes' insight valuable. Their years of study and their skills at divination — with or without the boost that comes from Oracle abilities — provide keen observations about political and economic situations. In exchange, Scribes who offer their services in this regard gain a look at the various power structures in the city-states where they've set up shop, and they find themselves in the company of philosophers, religious leaders, strategists, and other highly regarded individuals.

WHY THE SCRIBES OF THE SHELL?

The Scribes of the Shell appeal to characters with an academic bent and a sense of responsibility about ambrosia's impact on the world at large. They're more cautious about the miracle substance than the Society of the Lion or the Delphics, but that doesn't mean they fear it. The ongoing rivalry between the Scribes of the Shell and the Fellowship of Āšipu is fertile ground for groups who don't mind a bit of intra-party tension at play.

The Scribes of the Shell also present an opportunity to explore a culture from the appropriate period in time with no connection to Greece and its mythos. Like the Fellowship of Āšipu and the Scandian Storm, they are foreigners in this land.



MINOR COLLEGES

THE ORDER OF THEMIS

Motto: Natural Order, Fair Order, Destiny.

HISTORY

This ragtag group named itself for the regional myth of the titan goddess of justice or fair order, natural order, and destiny. After people discovered ambrosia, some wanted to study it and its effects, but those who founded the Order of Themis wanted to use the abilities ambrosia granted them to change the world for the better. One might think the Order was founded by a charismatic Olympian or Oracle, but Akakios is an illiterate Champion with only moderate social skills. He makes up for this with his genuine passion to help others that inspires those around him by example. Akakios heard the man the Society of the Lion calls "Seer" and took his words as a rallying cry. He gathered likeminded individuals who heard the cryptic hints who only needed a group behind them to act on those words of wisdom.

The Order of Themis isn't always known for the research and development side of things — they leave that to other Colleges. The Order of Themis is all about *doing* good. They go out and stop problems before they even become problems. As a result of the cause and effect of their actions not always being clear, they aren't widely known outside rumors. Some members believe they shouldn't make their deeds known, not out of a sense of secrecy for the Order, but rather out of modesty.

ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

The Order of Themis is a loosely organized philosophical experiment. Those with the means to do good (uphold "fair order") feel it's the natural order of the world for them to do so, and to do otherwise would be to go against their destinies. There's little in the way of hierarchy, and the group often descends into pure chaos with internal squabbling between missions of common goals that unite the members.

The loose divisions, to the extent they even exist, are based on category of skill. A member of the Order might be in multiple divisions if they're proficient in multiple skill sets. The main divisions are intelligence or scouting, politics, militia, and logistics, but someone could find a way to apply any skills.

Particular skills aren't required for membership, only a strong desire to uphold the three tenets of the Order. Young members can often find apprenticeships and tutors among the more experienced members to better serve the Order and their communities later.

ADVANTAGES

Members from disadvantaged backgrounds may not have had an opportunity otherwise to learn certain skills, such as literacy, prior to joining the Order of Themis. As this College believes their calling is beyond the prejudice of normal mortal society, they're accepting and helpful to their fellow members so long as they continue to uphold the tenets.

WHY THE ORDER OF THEMIS?

Playing in the Order of Themis is an opportunity to play do-gooder action-espionage. Spies and similar professions existed even in ancient times. Because of the lower level of tech available, characters must think on their feet and reach creative solutions to the problems the Storyguide presents them with.

This is also a College that starts out lacking a true hierarchy, so it's possible for the characters to create or even become the hierarchy as part of the story to stabilize the College.

THE VINES OF ILMUQAH

Motto: Shallow roots grow far-reaching vines.

HISTORY

D'mt is a newly founded kingdom and a farming-based society along the Red Sea. Ilmuqah, a bull sun god associated with vines and the harvest, sees much worship in D'mt, and is a protector of artificial irrigation. The kingdom, though new, values innovation and technology.

The Vines of Ilmuqah was founded by Queen Tsige, who subtly acted as King Neqa-tibeb's advisor. Its purpose is a mixed religious-scientific College whose members travel to other societies to learn. What do they aim to learn? Everything. Their goal is to learn as much as they can from faraway lands and bring that knowledge back to their kingdom to tutor their people and help their society advance at an ambitious pace. They send copies and translations of some discoveries they've made or learned from others ahead of them on trade routes back to D'mt so their kingdom isn't without their help while they're away.

Already far from home, the Vines of Ilmuqah stumbled upon a small source of ambrosia and tried

to study it, causing unpredictable and fantastic effects to many who imbibed. They intend to bring the ambrosia back to their people as well once they've learned from others using the material — if they can continue to guard it.

They have a complicated relationship with the Society of the Lion. While they want to soak up knowledge, and their fellow academics would be an excellent resource to help accomplish that, they also know how fiercely the Society guards ambrosia. The Vines of Ilmuqah believe ambrosia is a gift of the gods — specifically a blessing from Ilmuqah. Surely the god intended those uplifted by it to share, and the Vines agree that one College shouldn't control all access to the divine substance. The Vines would like to get their hands on more ambrosia to generally liberate it from the Society of the Lion.

ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

The Vines of Ilmuqah are led by a religious leader named Raghma who goes by both priest and priestess, changing their manner of dress to suit the title they're currently using. In the modern age, Raghma might refer to themself as genderfluid. The Vines divide themselves into particular areas of study. Each names an expert within the group — often whoever is most knowledgeable at the time — that others defer to in their subject. Being a subject matter expert confers no authority outside of that subject, but provides the individual with prestige and influence among their peers. The Vines of Ilmuqah are most concerned with the sciences such as agriculture and engineering, and the arts such as writing and painting. The Vines understand that without the sciences, artists lack advancements in their tools, but without the arts, sciences can't be cataloged and taught effectively to the masses. It's a delicate and symbiotic dance between the two sides.

The Vines are a relatively small group of only a few dozen. They divide necessary tasks, including guarding their sample of ambrosia, among themselves as needed. They all share faith, motivations, and common goals so little formal hierarchy is needed to keep the College running smoothly.

ADVANTAGES

The Vines of Ilmuqah have access to a range of knowledge from everywhere. They have contacts from across the explored world. Rumor has it they've even gotten the Children of the Mirror to speak amicably with them once.

The Vines of Ilmuqah avoid open conflict, so they maintain good standing with many other Colleges — even ones with rivalries. They're a socially-inclined group, even if their main purpose is research and discovery.

There's a responsibility in upholding a good repertoire with so many other groups, but the benefits are such that the Vines of Ilmuqah have generally positive opinions from others, which makes it easier for the next Vines to form bonds and gather information.

WHY THE VINES OF ILMUQAH?

The Vines of Ilmuqah are an ancient scientific College that, by its nature, promotes distant journeys and experimenting. They're adventure-brainiacs who take a different route than their seafaring College counterparts — the Vines mostly travel by land. The Vines do more learning about other peoples and directly interacting with others in their travels simply because they'll run into people more often.

They also aren't a College that's adventurous only for the sake of it. They intend to return home one day with all the new information from around the world to help improve their budding kingdom, even as they send bits and pieces ahead of them on trade routes. There's a sense of duty to their deities, community, and future generations in all the Vines do.

THE SCANDIAN STORM

Motto: Fire, Water, and Wit.

HISTORY

When ambrosia coaxed the dead from their graves in Scandia, many locals — both settlers and the indigenous clans — began seeking a means to end the curse upon their blighted lands. While cremation helped curb the rise of revenants, nothing the people did lifted the curse entirely. Under the command of a family matriarch named Sif, they defend against the revenants and other monsters that stalk the night. In addition to her many years as a warrior, Sif possesses grand insight due to a wig her husband's brother gifted to her as recompense for his antics. The wig was among a group of treasures purchased — some say stolen — from skilled craftsfolk in the city where the dead rise.

Each treasured artifact the Scandian Storm owns possesses some gift due to the ambrosia used in its manufacture. Sif's otherworldly insight showed her not only the true dangers of the lake, but the location of another pool of ambrosia on the isle of Herm. Her visions showed this ambrosia to be an effective means of gaining power, free of the corruption of the lake. Several of Sif's kin and their neighbors boarded a longship and made their way to Herm. Though they discovered the pool and gained great might,

their journey failed to reveal the key to ending the curse on their own lands.

Now empowered, these northerners travel across the known world seeking the means to cleanse their lands. Dubbed the Scandian Storm by the Society of Lion due to their apparent command of thunder and lightning, these travelers simply call themselves people of the North or Scandians. Though its purpose is clear, the Scandian Storm is far from single-minded in its pursuit. They're explorers and nomads at heart, which grants them some kinship with the Nautikoi when their paths cross. Many Scandians also see the Delphic League as kindred spirits of their own seer, Sif.

ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

The Scandian Storm operates as an extended family tree, with some members being blood relatives and others being adoptees, close friends, and other configurations that make up a found family. Although Sif is matriarch of her own branch, the family elders form the true roots of the group, dispatching and coordinating expeditions from their home on the northern coast of Scandia. Each branch of the Scandian Storm operates a longship in which they travel the sea in their quest to find an end to the blight on their land. While in foreign lands, members of the Scandian Storm work to attain their goals through investigation, diplomacy, and trade.

Despite their preference for peaceful exchanges, the Scandian Storm doesn't shy away from danger or violence if it crosses their path. Each expedition carries at least a few Champions, Oracles, and Olympians, either empowered by the ambrosia from Herm, the items forged near the lake, or the strange golden apples that grow from the ground periodically in Scandia. This power makes them formidable opponents. The Scandians consider death in battle among the highest honor, which lends them fearlessness and ferocity in combat.

While on expedition the Scandian Storm always looks to recruit allies. Some even join the Scandian community outright, returning to the family estate and dedicating their lives to cleansing corruption in the North. Those who do so are welcomed as family, but must prove themselves worthy in artisanship, combat, or wisdom to receive blessings of ambrosia.

ADVANTAGES

Although they bicker like any extended family, members of the Scandian Storm remain tightly connected and highly supportive of one another. Calls for aid never go unanswered, often resulting in overwhelming response. The people of the North are also well-traveled with allies across the known world and beyond. Due to their love of mead and song, the Scandians make friends easily. Some expeditions leave behind settlers in their travels, further establishing a worldwide presence.

Members who prove worthy gain access to ambrosia via the pool in Herm. Wotan leads an annual pilgrimage to the pool with members old and new who require access to ambrosia. Members of the Scandian Storm remain on Herm year-round, watching the pool and noting any visitors, though they don't intervene unless the visitor is a known enemy or a danger to the people of the North.

WHY THE SCANDIAN STORM?

Tales focused on the Scandian Storm involve exploration, heroic deeds, family dramas, and celebrations. Members of this group revel in discovering new lands and meeting new people. It's also easy to integrate Scandians into stories involving members of multiple groups, as they often travel the world befriending other heroes, seeking adventure, and expanding their family. The greatest responsibility a Scandian must attend is seeking a cure for the corruption that plagues the lake near the family estate. This leads them to seek out and barter with practitioners of sorcerous arts and scholarly methods in equal measure as they try to fix the damage done to the soil in Scandia.

Ambrosia fell throughout the world, not only on Mount Olympus. As quickly as the Colleges acted to control access to it, several other groups discovered their own sources and fiercely guarded them. Some glory in the changes the gods' nectar has wrought, and use their powers for personal gain. Others object to the Colleges' claims on ambrosia and its distribution — who are they to decide who's worthy and who falls short, simply because they were the first to climb a mountain?

THE GORGONS

Motto: Watch where you step, and upon whom you step.

HISTORY

The Gorgons have, to some degree, always existed. Where there are outcasts and undesirables in any society, thrown out into the wilds, the Gorgons were there to pick them up and offer them protection. Their origins are murky, and it is believed that they were founded by three orphaned sisters who were fantastically and frighteningly changed after imbibing ambrosia. They used their newfound gifts at first to build a following for themselves as priestesses of Athena, serving in a small shrine dedicated to the wise goddess of knowledge, women, and war.

The eldest was Stheno, whose hands were said to be hard as brass. She represented the warrior aspect of the goddess and she acted as an adjudicator in disputes. The middle sister, Euryale, had a gaze said to hypnotize any who met it and a voice that could stop an army in its tracks. She was the scholar who offered guidance and told portents of the future. The youngest sister Medusa maintained the humble temple and took care of its sacred animals, including the serpents which quickly became associated with all three sisters.

As their renown grew, so did resentment from neighboring village leaders who saw the sisters' rise in prominence as a threat to their own authority. Three unmarried and orphaned women with no man to rein them in and control them? It was unthinkable, even if Pallas Athena chose these women herself. Something had to be done — so a plan was hatched, and the rumors then ran rampant that these sisters were monstrous abominations who needed to be stopped.

A noble named Polydectes then held a feast wherein each guest was to bring a gift in tribute. A Champion named Perseus arrived empty-handed but told the noble he would fetch whatever it was he desired. The request was simple: bring back the head of one of the Gorgons, who had desecrated the temple of Pallas Athena and turned it into a den of iniquity. Perseus, woefully unaware of being used as a pawn by Polydectes, journeyed to the temple where these supposed monsters dwelled.

When Perseus arrived, he realized he had been tricked. The temple had not been desecrated as Polydectes had described, but was instead well-tended and being looked after solely by the youngest sister, Medusa. She told Perseus he had been expected, as Euryale's visions had foretold, and so Medusa offered him exactly what Polydectes desired: the petrified head of a Gorgon. It wasn't an actual head, but no one would know the difference. All Medusa asked in return was that Perseus spread the story of how monstrous they were, and soon the three sisters and their followers went underground — literally.

As the stories of the serpent-haired sisters passed from village to village, so too did their legend grow. Now the Gorgons are feared, their names whispered as a boogeyman to small disobedient children as a cautionary tale: fear and obey the gods (and your parents), lest you too be cursed.

RECRUITMENT

To be recruited into the Gorgons is to have been pushed to the fringes of society, to be seen as a non-person or undesirable by local officials, neighbors, or even family and friends. With few other avenues to safeguard one's personhood and freedom, the Gorgons provide a safe harbor for those whom civil society has disenfranchised.

The Gorgons especially welcome those who have tasted ambrosia but found their physical forms inexorably changed, too — those who faced rejection and fearmongering by society, being decried as monsters for would-be heroes to slay to spread tales of their glory. Be they serpent-haired, harpy-clawed, half-man, half-bull in appearance, widows past childbearing age, the disabled, those outcast by outdated or superstitious beliefs — all find safety, inclusion, and a

community within the Gorgons, provided they also work to advance the College's goals according to their skills and ability.

Those who join the Gorgons, whether by stumbling into their caves or being brought into the fold by another Gorgon who saw their plight, are usually members of the College for life. Very few find a reason to leave, but when one does, they undergo hypnosis to bury the knowledge of the Gorgon Karst so they don't inadvertently place those remaining in danger from would-be heroes seeking to make a name for themselves in slaying monsters.

ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

The Gorgons operate in independent cells consisting of three distinct branches named after its mythological founders — Stheno, Euryale, and Medusa — which reflects on the skills and modalities of the members of that branch. While there is no centralized base of operations, they have been known to congregate in Sarpedon, somewhere near Cisthene in Anatolia, believed to be the homeland of their founders.

Medusan members of the Gorgons make up the bulk of the community and serve as the College's intelligence arm, acting as its eyes and ears throughout the ancient world. They are likened to garden snakes, who slip in and out of areas often unnoticed and unbothered.

Euryalian members form the tactical and strategy arm of the Gorgons, those who see further afield and try to navigate the ever-changing terrain of the world in an age of wonder and discovery, utilizing the skills of Oracles and the information the Medusans provide them. They are likened to vipers, who can strike with deadly aim and poison other Colleges against the other to upset the balance of power.

Sthenoist members are the militant arm, engaging in guerrilla operations that further promote the Gorgon cause, the constrictors who will press upon their enemies until all their life is squeezed out of them. They also protect the underground cave network known as the Gorgon Karst that crisscrosses the continent, which the College uses as an underground city and communal space, ensuring that the most vulnerable of their College are kept safe from those who would do them harm.

No one branch is considered greater than the other, as each has its purpose and works toward the College's common goal: creating and protecting a place where the outcasts are welcomed and celebrated, and to acquire as much ambrosia as possible to ensure that none can disrupt their vision.

As for who leads the Gorgons, that is shrouded in more mystery. It is believed that the founders still live, including young Medusa who, unlike her immortal sisters Stheno and Euryale, was believed to have been slain by the hero Perseus. No one within the Gorgons knows for sure if that is the truth, but they are also content to not question it. There is power in myths, and a College founded and led by three powerful "monsters" is a strong enough shield for them to believe in.

GOALS AND METHODS

The Gorgons desire one thing and one thing only: to have a place where they can exist peaceably and not be threatened by those either seeking to make names for themselves and grow their legends, or by those who fear that which they do not understand. While not all Gorgons have imbibed ambrosia and have been subsequently changed by it, there are more than a few among their number with newfound physical differences that set them apart from the general populace. Those that can pass unnoticed in a crowd are extremely useful assets for the College out in the wider world — they can act as servants in places of power, and glean information that can then be sold for the right price, securing the community's safety for another passing of the seasons.

There lies within the Gorgons a definite spectrum of opinions as to what their differences represent: are they meant to protect those who share their differences, who are outcast, or should they seek to use these newfound blessings from the gods as proof of their ascension and to bring those who oppose them to heel?

While they have a tentative relationship with the Society of the Lion, who like the Gorgons seek to understand what about the ambrosia transformed them, members can never quite shake their distrust — a Gorgon revealing themselves to a non-Gorgon risks exposure that marks them as a target to be sought by the Circle of Heroes. On the opposite side of the spectrum, they occasionally find their goals aligned with the Order of Titans, who see these transformations as proof of being chosen by the gods to enact their will upon the mortals who would oppose them.

USING GORGONS IN YOUR GAME

The Gorgons have a monstrous reputation because they represent a disruption to the "natural" order of societies. They don't abide by the usual social contracts traditionally found in Greece, as they exist outside of it — often not by choice, but by necessity. They rail against that which they feel to be an unfair and unjust world when all they desire is equality and a place to live in peace, but until that becomes a reality, they have no compunctions against using their "monstrosity" to keep their enemies or any who would jeopardize their safety at bay.

The lines of good and evil can blur when the Gorgons are brought into play because although as a College they share the commonality of desiring safety, some members embrace their monstrous side more and aren't afraid to be feared — sometimes the best defense is a good offense. To use the Gorgons is to introduce moral dilemma for characters: are they truly monsters, as legends have led characters to believe? Or are they misunderstood outcasts who have banded together for safety and community? What does it mean to be cast as a monster in a world where there are those seen as gods and demigods cutting large swaths of destruction in their paths? Who really is the monster, then?

THE ORDER OF THE TITANS

Motto: Stand in Awe.

HISTORY

Throughout the world, stories of creation and destruction, of birth and death, of good and evil are found etched into the very fabric of belief and history. For everything that exists, there is a complimentary or diametrically opposed force to bring it into balance. In the beginning, there were the primordial gods of Uranus and Gaia from whom all other "gods" were said to descend. The story of how the son of Uranus, the Titan Cronus, overthrew the tyrannical god and established a new pantheon has been passed down in temples and around hearth fires for as long as anyone remembers.

The cycle was repeated when the titan slayer known as Zeus overthrew Cronus, leading to Zeus becoming the new gilded hero and eventually elevated by the common folk as a benevolent god, while those who were deemed titans were vilified, scattered into hiding or banished. Their names were forgotten as the gods of Olympus became more dominant throughout the land. Eventually, the bloodied past faded from memory and passed into legend. Zeus and his ilk became the benevolent demigods and heroes upon whom the common folk could rely, and the titans transformed into power hungry and corrupt entities to be feared.

As time went on, there were those with whom the struggle resonated. Whether or not there was any truth to the rise and fall of Uranus, Cronus, or even Zeus, it mattered not. Anyone that stood against the gods of Olympus and could go toe-to-toe with them were in turn painted as titans. As the new, ambrosia-imbued Olympians reached new heights in their dominion over the new age, those who remembered the treachery of the gods and their follies soon banded together and founded the Order of the Titans.

The founding members of the Order of Titans took upon themselves the pseudonyms of Uranus' forgotten children — Crius, Iapetus, Hyperion, Phoebe, and Tethys — and banded together with a singular goal: to restore the world to the way it was before enlightenment. Change swept in with the discovery of ambrosia. Calling themselves the "Pantheon," the five founding members and their followers have spread across the world, sowing discord upon the premise that "*What has happened once will happen again*" — meaning that just as Zeus overthrew Cronus, so, too will Zeus — or those Inspired individuals claiming his power — be overthrown. It's a matter of when, not if. These upheavals can end, so long as the Titans are the last ones standing atop the mountain.

RECRUITMENT

The Order's requirements for joining are minimal: Have you been elevated by the taste of ambrosia and wish to seize for yourself your true birthright? Do you desire to enact your will upon the world? Are you willing to stand with other titans when the so-called heroes come to tear us down?

The Order of the Titans is mostly composed of Champions, Oracles, and Olympians. While the Order welcomes those mortals who gladly and willingly follow its members as faithful adherents, there is a clear delineation between members and followers. Still, both have their places, and mortals who spread tales of the titans' might come in particularly handy.

For its core membership, the Order takes Inspired individuals of all kinds, provided they're willing to mind their own business and let other Order members do as they see fit. Though the Circle of Heroes would have people believe otherwise, plenty of Titans play the part of benevolent demigods aiding humanity. Their followers might shower them with gifts and attention, helping the Titans achieve cult-like status, but the Order is quick to point out the Circle's propensity for making shrines out of their heroes' tombs. What makes it acceptable for them, but not the Order's Olympians?

Other members of the Order of the Titans are drunk on their own power and have no qualms with using it to their advantage. They demand tribute from nearby villages, threaten to wash away a coastline with a sudden tsunami in a fit of anger, or lure foolish captains to their deaths with a song for fun. The Pantheon rarely interferes with such members, and instead actively recruits them.

ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

The Order of the Titans is ruled by a council of five known as the Pantheon. Of these five, Crius is seen as the first among them as equals, followed then in order by Tethys, Iapetus, Phoebe, and Hyperion. They are, to a degree, the Titanic corollaries to the core Olympian gods — Zeus, Hades, Poseidon, Demeter, and Hera — and relish in acting in ways antithetical to their counterparts while maintaining a close enough similarity to confuse those less informed.

From these five do all orders and endeavors come down, and very few question them on account that the killing of messengers is a common cause of death.

The other Titans hold no formal positions, and are mostly content to ignore their brethren and be ignored in return. However, when the Pantheon puts out a call for the Titans to gather in force, many jockey for recognition. This is as much to gain the majority of the spoils as it is for the ego boost, though some see little difference: whoever has the biggest hoard must therefore be the most formidable.

GOALS AND METHODS

Everybody wants to the rule the world, but the Order of the Titans believe that they are the ones destined to do so, that they alone have the might — and therefore the right — to drive the world forward and remake it in their own image. Achieving that means ensuring there are none who can stand opposed to the Titans, making acquiring and hoarding ambrosia — and denying its access to the Colleges that oppose them — key to their immediate plans. If no one else can partake of the food of the gods, therefore transforming them into something greater than they once were, it stands to reason that there would be fewer who could feasibly stand in their way to complete and total supremacy over the rest of humanity.

The promise of ambrosia has become a currency, with the Pantheon considering themselves the sole arbiters of those deemed worthy enough to join their cause. For some villages and petty kingdoms, staying in the good graces of the Titans means there is always the chance that they, too, can find themselves elevated. Few succeed, but for many the possibility alone is incentive enough to sacrifice their own to assist the Titans in their aims. What greater glory can there be than giving up one's life in the pursuit of the will of godlike beings? Surely, it means their names will go down in history as those most favored. A pity, then, that the Pantheon rarely, if ever, acknowledges them.

For every force lies an equal and opposing force, and therefore the greatest threat to the Order of the Titans and their aims are, of course, the self-styled Circle of Heroes. Their similarity to one another often leads them to being confused among the common folk. The Order uses that uncertainty to their advantage to malign the Circle. It's a game of give and take, with neither side gaining much ground in their struggle against the other.

USING THE ORDER OF THE TITANS IN YOUR GAME

The Titans are the quintessential boogeyman of the setting, seen as archaic, outdated, and power-hungry, with no care for anything beyond their own selfish aims. Generations have been taught that the original titans were the Old Gods who treated humanity as their playthings, as lesser, and took pleasure in creating misery. Some members within the Order embrace this portrayal — when have mortals ever shown the proper respect or deference? Even those who want to redeem the titans in the eyes of humanity find that eventually, absolute power corrupts absolutely. When other people see you as a god, you start acting like one — for good or for ill.

Rarely do the Titans cooperate with other societies, setting themselves apart as otherworldly and

distant as gods themselves. When situations requiring outside help arise, the Titans demand to be given point and the power to make leadership decisions. Failure to show them proper obeisance they feel owed to them usually results in cautionary tales being sung.

Even within the Order of the Titans, there are differing philosophies on what it means to be elevated above the rest of humanity, but often those holding more progressive ideals keep them to themselves, hoping that maybe, just maybe, their peers aren't as power-drunk on ambrosia as their spiritual founder was and that maybe the disparate descendants of the gods can once again reunite toward a common cause.

THE TYRSENNIAN FLEET

Motto: Terrors lurks on the next wave.

HISTORY

A ragtag group of pirates gathered under Captain Zephyr in search of wealth and freedom from their previous lives as they sailed the Mediterranean. They had it rough initially — it turned out there was a steep learning curve in ancient piracy. The first crew struggled, succumbing to horrific disease and injury. Those who persevered were tempered like the steel blades they wore at their hips and were just as eager to shed blood.

Rumors of the crew's exploits were, for a time, often worse than their actual activities. The original crew of the first ship was composed of baseline mortals, because no one had seen real Inspired mortals before — only heard of them in legends. As they became local legends in their own right, failures on their opponents' part were attributed to the pirates' supposed divine gifts. At first, this was entirely unfounded, but Captain Zephyr held no inclinations toward setting the record straight.

One fateful day, Zephyr and his crew overtook a ship carrying special cargo. They couldn't identify the shimmering gold liquid in the flasks until after they passed one around to drink during the celebration of a successful haul. The first mate, Stella, remarked the substance must be for emperors or gods, so it was only fitting that everyone in the pirate crew, even the lowliest deckhand, should partake after such a glorious victory. The crew had more than hangovers the next morning — they'd all been changed by the ambrosia.

The Inspiration was a collective rush for the pirates. Zephyr and his crew immediately put their new abilities to use, terrorizing merchant ships across the Mediterranean. He even captured entire ships to be repurposed into his growing fleet. Zephyr gifted Stella and several of the most experienced original crew the title of captain for the new vessels, and offered the captured crews the choice to join or die. With their new powers, no ship was off-limits.

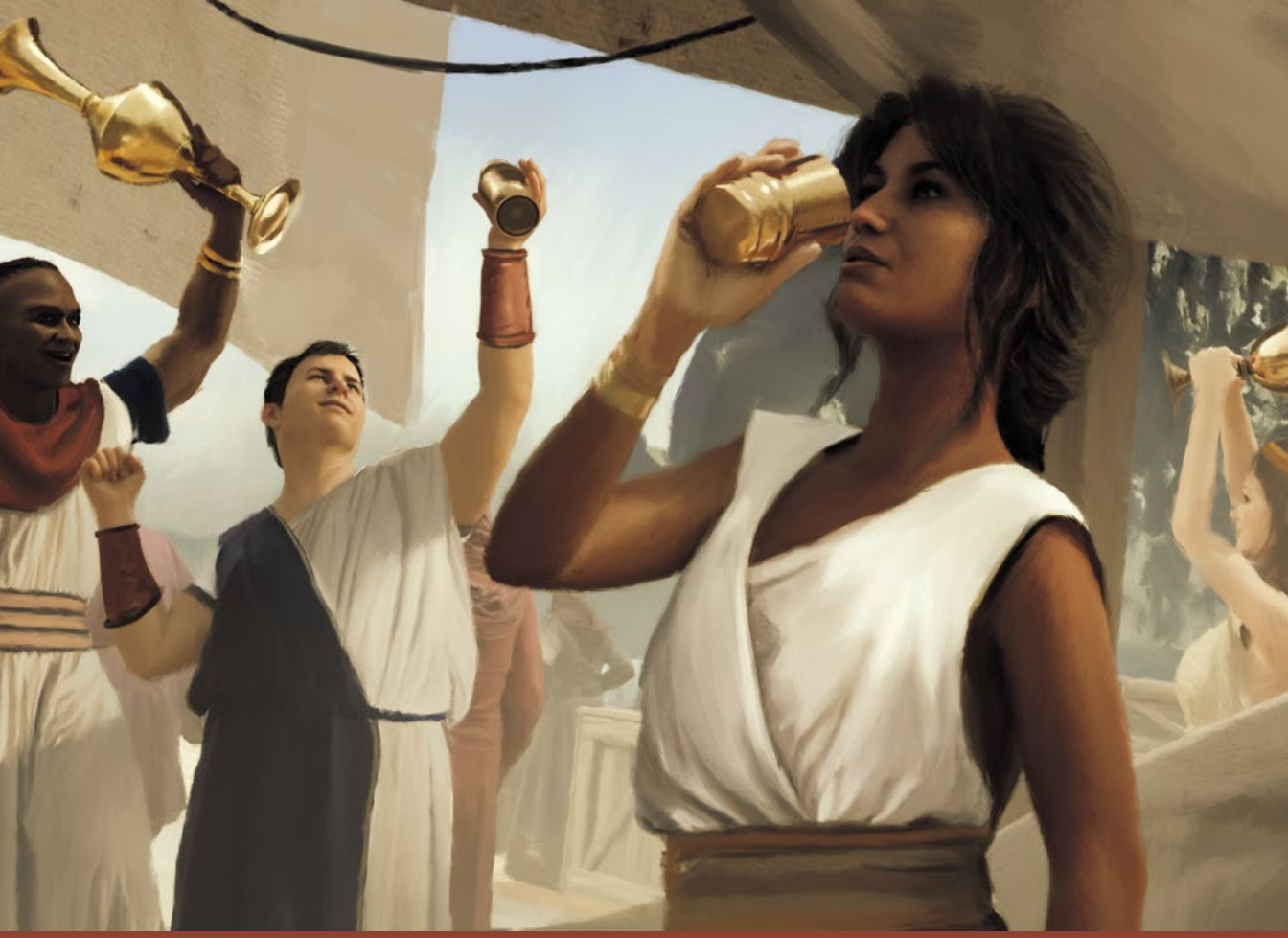
The Fleet destroyed many businesses and callously murdered those who got in their way. What started as an annoyance rapidly became a large threat, and the governments of the region have thus far been powerless to put them down. Zephyr plans to keep it that way, and maintain tight control of his growing seafaring empire. No longer relegated to harrying small fishing villages, the Tyrsennian Fleet raids busy ports and harries trading vessels. Their preference for swift ships and having an Oracle providing favorable winds makes them hard for navies to catch, let alone capture.

RECRUITMENT

The Tyrsennian Fleet recruits Inspired mortals with a taste for adventure and a desire to leave everything behind to set sail. They attract those with nothing to lose — criminals, runaways, sailors from foreign navies who abandoned their posts. This isn't a way of life for someone with a strict moral code. Those who seem too naive about the world generally won't even be considered, so many sailors are already jaded before they ever step aboard and are only bound to get more hardened as time goes on.

Sailing experience is highly preferred, though if a recruit is impressive enough otherwise and willing to learn, a captain may still take them on as an apprentice. Skills other than sailing experience the Fleet prefers include combat skill, general hardiness, and specialized jobs like cooks and healers. They're also interested in any Inspired powers and technology that would make piracy easier, such as increased stealth and controlling the weather or sea itself. The life of a pirate can be backbreaking and labor-intensive. While an Inspired individual can do the work of multiple baseline mortals in many cases, much of the day-to-day effort to keep a ship afloat remains the same.

Initially, the Fleet had to ask people in disreputable locations if they were interested in joining the crew. Now that they've gained



notoriety, though, interested parties seek them out. Representatives can be found at dockside establishments, usually supplying entertainers with ideas for their next songs.

ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

The Tyrsennian Fleet are mostly based out at sea, but when they need to lie low, they try to stay at the island of Corsica. The island is centralized and contested by several powers at once, yet hasn't been urbanized.

Zephyr is still at the top of the chain of command, now overseeing seven rowing warships called galleys. Five of these ships have capacity for 50 rowers and two have capacity for 30, though Inspired technology and Olympian powers make seating all rowers at once unnecessary (if everything is working). Each ship has its own captain and crew. The first mate answers to the ship's captain and becomes temporary captain if the captain is unavailable or dies. The total number of pirates on the larger ships is about 65; on the smaller ships, the total is roughly 40. These numbers could be as small as half these estimates or fewer if there were a higher concentration of Olympians on a ship.

A captain runs their own ship largely as they please and appoints or hires other positions, such as a healer or cook, at their own discretion. Zephyr doesn't tend to interfere with day-to-day running of the ships besides the one he captains, other than checking with the captains and first mates to ensure nothing's severely amiss. Mutiny is frowned upon but not unheard of. The only one no one dares cross is Zephyr — yet.

GOALS AND METHODS

The Tyrsennian Fleet's main goal is to enrich themselves through piracy. They want to become the most formidable and feared pirate fleet in the world, and they recruit with an eye towards a fleet comprising all Inspired mortals. Some captains have an even loftier goal to one day directly go toe-to-toe with the worlds' premier navies and

overpower them. With the powers they wield on their side, they want none but the gods themselves to dare oppose them — and they'd put up a fierce battle against a god, too.

Much like the Nautikoi, the Tyrsennian Fleet is a seafaring College. Unlike the Nautikoi, their primary goal isn't exploration or betterment of anyone but themselves. The Nautikoi tend to get in their way, so the Tyrsennian Fleet harasses them in particular and often strike before the Nautikoi know the Fleet is nearby.

Zephyr oversees raids requiring coordination of multiple ships. He doesn't entirely dictate the agenda for which targets to hit, but lends a lot of sway in the decision-making and his opinions carry the most weight. If a captain sees a target their ship could take on alone, they're free to do so without consulting Zephyr so long as the pirate emperor gets his cut of the spoils.

Since they aren't an overly large fleet and only recently achieved their current size, the Tyrsennian Fleet relies mainly on stealth and swiftly overwhelming an opponent before the opponent can mount a defense. Zephyr's fond of tactics that surround targets with Fleet ships to prevent escape and demoralize the opponent. The Fleet also chases unprepared ships into storms and rough seas to wear stronger targets down first with the environment. They've cut a deal with a school of sirens, driving ships with larger crews toward them to their dooms. The sirens get the crew; the Fleet gets the ship and its spoils.

The Tyrsennian Fleet is often brutal to those it encounters. They're not afraid to kill anyone who might complicate their pillaging, though they also don't go out of their way to wholesale murder groups that don't put up a resistance. They believe they have some degree of honor, after all. Different captains have different expectations for the level of collateral damage they consider acceptable.

USING THE TYRSENNIAN FLEET IN YOUR GAME

The Tyrsennian Fleet are a fairly uncomplicated group on the surface, and can be as nuanced as the Storyguide wishes. It's possible that characters could deal only with the Fleet from a distance, while evading capture or injury on the sea, and never interact with the members as individuals.

Most of what would make the Fleet morally complicated isn't the group itself, but whatever individuals the Storyguide introduces and their reasons for joining in the first place. This is a Counter Society that attracts the lawless or those the law doesn't account for — such as those in marginalized groups who may not have as good prospects elsewhere.

There's always the potential for high-seas adventure, but there's also an additional potential for characters to explore the reasons why those who gain power suddenly might opt to take a harmful path. The Tyrsennian Fleet is rife with greed and envy, even when the members have powers of the gods.

The Tyrsennian Fleet are unlikely to be even begrudging temporary allies with characters, but in sufficiently strained circumstances that threaten their way of life, they might do so. They're prone to double-crossing and other trickery the moment it's more useful to do that instead. They'd sell characters out in a heartbeat to save their own skins or even make a quick buck.

THE CULT OF APHRODITE

Motto: None escape her love or wrath.

HISTORY

Aphrodite is a young woman from Cyprus. Her family and compatriots worked in the copper mines there, toiling away as they wasted from disease and progressive injury. And for what? Little pay, if any. Many were enslaved. Aphrodite watched and cared for many around her as they died slow and agonizing deaths from phthisis (known in modern day as tuberculosis) caused by the mining. No one seemed to care. The miners were replaceable, after all.

She washed and anointed the bodies of the dead, preparing them for burial. It felt like she'd done it so many times, the scent of the oil would never leave her skin. She wondered who'd be left to care for her when her own time came, who would offer the lament, if anyone would be there to walk in her funeral procession. Aphrodite was furious at the injustice and sick with grief, but she felt helpless to get the vengeance she craved. She begged the gods, including her namesake, the local goddess of Cyprus, for any help they might give her to right the terrible wrong. That help came, as many of the gods' unlikely gifts do, in the form of a goose.

The goose had bathed in a pool of ambrosia, and when Aphrodite attempted to brush the golden substance from its feathers, she found herself

transformed. She became even more alluring than before and found she could sway entire crowds without effort. People finally listened to her cause, about the plight of so many that society tossed away as disposable. Her following grew as she explored her new powers as an Olympian.

Aphrodite used her influence to get revenge for her grief and then some. Inspired to the point of frenzy by her passionate words, her followers became a vengeful mob, attacking those who had harmed and exploited her, her family, and their community. With the mines shut down and their owners dead or fled, Aphrodite found new targets for her wrath. At first, she found them easily: corrupt officials, bandits, slave owners, and the like. But as her power and influence grew, and those who had reason to fear her cult got out of Cyprus, she grew less certain of who was a friend and who was an enemy deserving punishment. Aphrodite expanded her definitions of harm and exploitation to eventually include sufficient inconveniences and minor embarrassment. She would never tolerate those outside her cult doing what she allows herself and her cult to do in pursuit of her cause.

Aphrodite's a self-declared protector of Cyprus who now even claims to be the avatar of the goddess herself. Instead of feeling safer, some citizens live in fear of her and her cult's supposed protection and its capricious nature. Some now pray as Aphrodite herself once did, begging the gods to free them from her rule.

Recently, the cult's gotten large enough that much of it's no longer under Aphrodite's direct control. The members act according to how they believe Aphrodite would want them to act, which is often highly destructive and increasingly chaotic. So far, Aphrodite believes she can rein in the worst actors and wrench wayward cultists back in line. She's too self-assured to admit that she can't, as a single person, micromanage the actions of every cult member.

RECRUITMENT

The Cult of Aphrodite draws on the overlap in the popular culture of cults dedicated to single gods and cults dedicated to Olympians. Most followers are the young and restless with little recourse in government as they're too young to hold any office and yet old enough to be compelled into backbreaking labor. There's a lot of undirected angst and general upset feelings at something that's not working, but the followers can't quite verbalize it. Aphrodite offers release for those feelings, and a sense that someone out there cares, even if a member never directly speaks with Aphrodite herself.

The cult's at a stage where it doesn't expend as much internal effort trying to win over its opposition or bringing others into the fold. Its advertisements stem from its dramatic public actions and word of mouth from the followers. It's very self-selecting for its members now, and inadvertently becoming increasingly violent as time progresses. Those interested in the tactics and supposed cause seek the cult on their own.Organization and Structure

Aphrodite herself is at the top of the cult structure, surrounded by a small circle of close sycophantic confidants. No one ever questions her or her methods, lest they become someone she feels betrayed her and the next target of her concentrated wrath. The confidants are split between those who sincerely worship the ground she walks on, and the few who can see through Aphrodite's force of presence to the glaring flaws underneath — which they use to manipulate her in turn. She is, after all, still young and mortal even if she claims to be the avatar of a goddess with some of the powers to back it up.

Aphrodite has a multiplying throng of followers who get loosely herded in different directions by the confidants. Aphrodite is the only Olympian in the cult's highest ranks. She counts a few Champions among her trusted guards, and heeds the advice of a pair of Oracles, but is highly cautious about letting other Inspired into her inner circle.

The cult remains based in Cyprus, though gains followers outside that area. The base is Aphrodite's childhood home, which has become something of a religious site for adherents. As the cult spreads and Aphrodite loses control of her followers, new smaller satellite bases are popping up. Aphrodite has no idea what goes on at some of these bases, or that the new and distant one in Thebes even exists. A few of these offshoots are led by other Champions, Oracles, and Olympians who have declared themselves Aphrodite's high priests and priestesses and giving orders in her name.

GOALS AND METHODS

Aphrodite the Olympian wholeheartedly believes that her new abilities are gifts from the wrathful goddess herself. As far as she's concerned, she's been given the divine right to exact vengeance as she sees fit, even as her idea of vengeance becomes increasingly nebulous and bloodthirsty.

The Cult of Aphrodite can be violent and disruptive when they wish to be. They stir up riots among local people and start their own trouble if none is currently brewing. If someone becomes an obstacle, they remove that obstacle by whatever chaotic means their whims dictate. Some cultists specialize in ruining reputations, others raze shops and farmland. Some steal money and valuables like livestock, and still others murder their enemies. The followers take marching orders to an extent, some more than others. Aphrodite's confidants tell the area's followers what the current target and objective is, help rile up the followers enough to spark the initial action, and then let the chaos loose.

Several of Aphrodite's sycophantic confidants see a chance to pursue their personal agendas by implying their personal enemies are enemies of Aphrodite. They suck up to Aphrodite's face enough so she won't look deeper into what they're doing. Her wrath would be swift if she ever discovered their betrayal, but for now she's pacified by her own ego and a few kind words.

Aphrodite targets those she believes harms Cyprus in particular, originally copper mine owners and operators who caused unsafe working conditions for many, but this has extended to include anyone who bruises Aphrodite's ego. Her confidants mostly pick targets, when they choose their own, that align with Aphrodite's stated goals, but as her definitions broaden, so does their potential target list. Though they once served a purpose, Aphrodite and her cult have long since warped into that which they originally sought to fight.

USING THE CULT OF APHRODITE IN YOUR GAME

The Cult of Aphrodite is the kind of enemy group that started off on the right track but quickly went off the rails. The characters, if they learn of it, could likely empathize with Aphrodite's original goal, whether or not they agree with her methods. However, she's getting to the point in her personal vengeance quest that she's so far removed from her original and long since completed goal of exacting revenge on the mine owners and operators that she's started to harm people in the same situation she and her family were in before she acquired her powers. Additionally, she doesn't realize that she's now exploiting people for her personal desires — the very thing she originally decried.

It would be difficult, given her belief of her divine right of vengeance, but Aphrodite may be reasoned with in some cases, especially by Inspired characters from similar backgrounds. However, Aphrodite's far too intolerant of criticism to remain an ally for long, even if characters manage to get on her good side.

The cult itself, insofar as it acts independently of Aphrodite's direct orders, is a particular threat. They don't take kindly to anything perceived as meddling with their leader or her plans. Aphrodite herself would have a rude awakening should she ever try to redirect the cult in a vastly different direction from how it's previously been run, such as if the characters successfully reasoned with her. She's an Olympian, but she's not nearly as powerful as she believes she is because she's never encountered resistance she couldn't put down with her cult. What happens when the resistance she wants to quash is made up of the very cultists she trained?

CHILDREN OF THE MIRROR

Motto: Gods and family before all else.

HISTORY

The Olmecs are the predecessors of the Aztecs and other Mesoamerican cultures. They're polytheistic, build pyramids and detailed stone statues to honor their deities and rulers, and write in a form of hieroglyphs. They've developed a calendar, as well as the first drainage system in the Americas, and their mathematics have a concept for zero. Religion is so central to their lives that city planning is designed around their temples.

During a religious ceremony, ambrosia fell from the sky and onto the sacred obsidian mirror used to divine the fate of their community. The ambrosia not only affected nearby priests and onlookers, but also caused a portal to open on the mirror. Everyone present believed wholeheartedly they'd seen a miracle and it would be an insult to the gods to refuse to see whatever it was they were showing their loyal worshipers through this mirror portal.

The priests and others who approached had difficulty seeing the misty images on the other side and leaned closer — too close. With a crack of energy and a surge of golden light, the obsidian mirror shattered. When the light dimmed, all those who had been present at the ceremony found themselves transported to the strange new land of Thessalian Larissa, Greece, where they neither spoke the language nor understood the customs.

NO, ALIENS DIDN'T BUILD THE LA VENTA PYRAMID

There are many similarities between even the Olmecs and the Greeks. And yet... the Greeks are often portrayed in history and literature as enlightened philosophers and ancient Mesoamerican cultures such as the Olmecs are portrayed as primitive. Even the Olmec's historical breakthroughs are attributed to the work of extraterrestrials by some, while the Greeks' are simply accepted to have human inventors.

This note isn't to say that the cultures were the ***same*** — because they weren't. It's more to keep in mind how you frame them in your stories. In this write-up, the Children of the Mirror might come off as cultish to some modern eyes, but the religious aspects were prevalent at the time in many cultures and the insular nature of the Counter Society is a learned survival response to past linguistic and cultural misunderstandings getting out of hand.

At first, the Children of the Mirror encountered hostility from the locals who came to investigate the source of the strange flash of light so soon after the starfall. The Olmecs couldn't explain themselves in the locals' language, or understand the source of the conflict. Outrage followed everywhere they went. Some Olmecs were arrested and punished harshly for laws they didn't know they broke. It seemed nothing they did was correct in this strange world to which the gods brought them.

Still, they persevered, believing their troubles were a test of dedication to their gods. Enduring trials and many forms of sacrifice, especially of the self, in service of their gods was imperative. Surely, the gods would protect them in the end. And they would protect one another as they always had. The persecution from outsiders only strengthened the Children of the Mirror's bonds

The Children of the Mirror had no linguistic similarities between their native tongue and ancient Greek, and because there hadn't previously been trade or travel between the two locations, there initially weren't any resources for translation. They struggled at first, only completely communicating among themselves and picking up imperfect Greek from context and guesses. Even as they learned the language and cultural rules of their surroundings for survival, the Children of the Mirror grew resentful of the Greeks.

They now have mutual grudges spanning years with other communities. They continuously get drawn into conflicts or retaliate for them in a slow-boil of ever-escalating disputes. The Children of the Mirror keep to themselves when they can, but fiercely defend their family and the traditions they brought with them.

RECRUITMENT

The Children of the Mirror are primarily the original Olmec onlookers and priests. They don't often welcome outsiders because of numerous hostile past experiences, but when they do, the outsiders are commonly outcasts from their home communities. Many are in search of a place to belong. The Children also take in escaped slaves, considering them free according to Olmec traditions. Outside recruits who are respectful of the Children's beliefs most often become part of the family unit, such as through marriage or official or unofficial adoption.

To the extent the Counter Society attracts Inspired individuals, they favor Oracles. Their skills as advisors and diplomats prove beneficial in negotiations with local rulers, and their power over the weather ensures bountiful harvests.

In any case, someone can never ask to join the Children of the Mirror; they open their door to those they consider safe and potentially trustworthy. It takes a herculean effort to earn the Children of the Mirror's guarded trust after all they've collectively been through, but once a recruit earns the trust, the recruit is family and protected as such.

ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

The Children of the Mirror keep a council of nine priests, with one designated as the head priest, who acts as a local head of state. These are the Counter Society's guides who interpret the gods' will. Many of the council's members tend to be Oracles. Council positions aren't automatically inherited by birth, but an individual might be more likely to be

exposed to the intricacies of what the job entails from a young age if a parent served in the role.

Other than their spiritual guides, the Children of the Mirror also organize along smaller family units, though they consider all Children of the Mirror extended family to some degree. Because the Counter Society is family-focused, they emphasize childcare and ensuring everyone in their community has their needs met.

They eventually settled in the forested outskirts of Athens to practice their religion and live in relative peace. The current head priestess, Ti, is an Oracle of considerable power. She took over from her father after his death, and hopes someday to carry his bones home to be buried in the city he so diligently served.

GOALS AND METHODS

The Children's main goal is to live as they please and maintain their gods and traditions. They remain an insular society, but have established trade relationships and treaties with nearby communities. Thus far, they've refused to take sides when nearby Greek powers come into conflict. While the Children of the Mirror haven't given up on returning to Olmec lands, such an undertaking is dangerous with current seafaring technology. The youngest generation has never seen the beaches of the Gulf of Mexico, though their elders paint vivid pictures of home in their tales. A few want to explore to see the place their relatives tell stories about, and pay close attention to the Nautikoi's exploratory efforts. Some even reach out to Nautikoi captains against their elders' wishes.

They're particularly interested in divination, especially with mirrors. Oracles among the Children look for ways to reopen the portal that brought them to Greece, and seek sources of ambrosia to help recreate the original circumstances. The Children perform sacrifices and bloodletting as part of their rituals, but it's primarily focused on animals and symbolic acts of self-sacrifice such as sacred tongue piercing.

Head Priestess Ti's father, the previous head priest, died under suspicious circumstances. Ti wasn't blamed for her father's death — the Children of the Mirror have a laundry list of enemies, after all, and they're so close-knit it would be unthinkable to do such a thing. She's rumored to already be looking for a successor in case the same should happen to her.

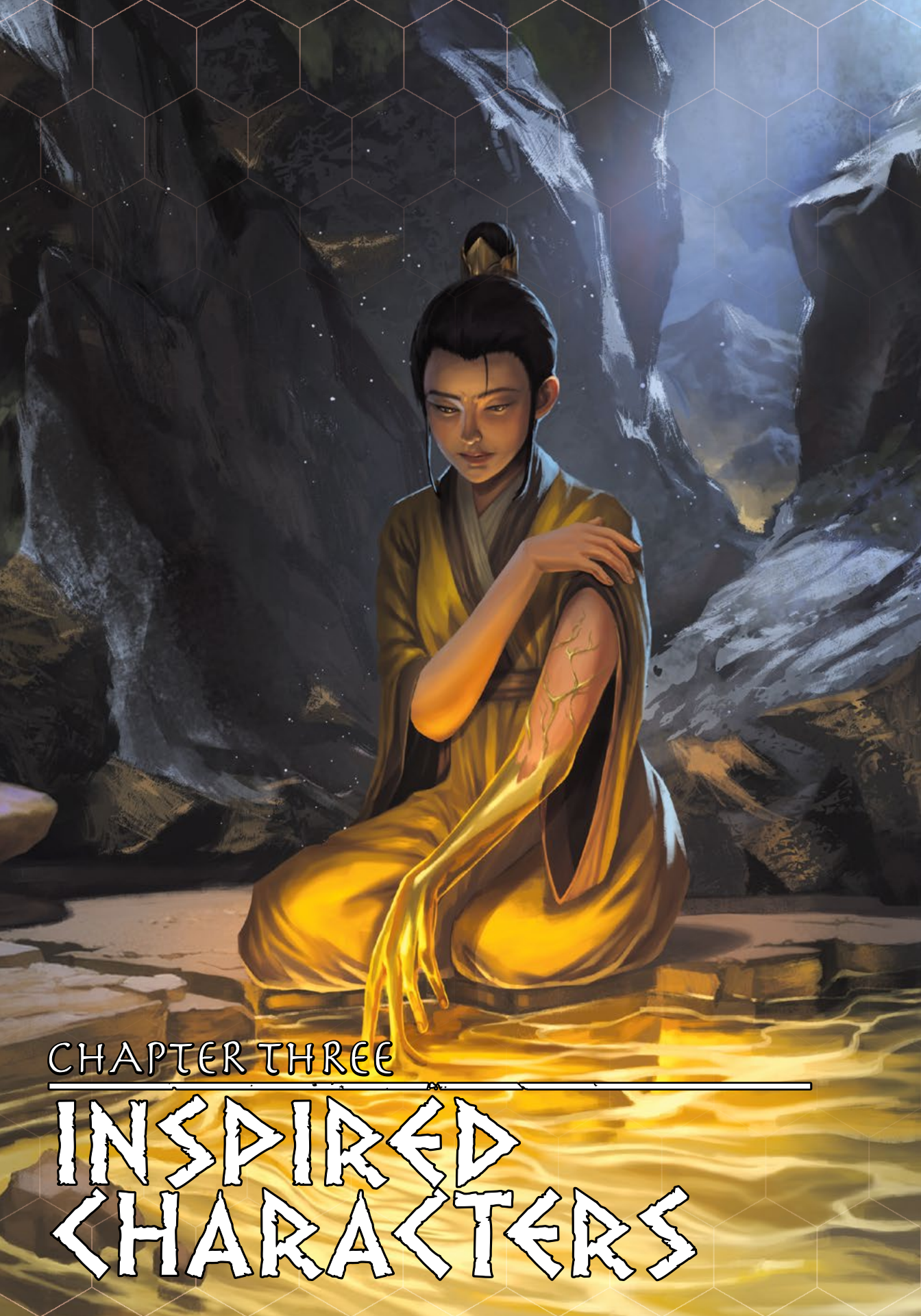
The Children of the Mirror have a negative disposition toward most Greek Colleges thanks to those earliest interactions. As much as they dislike the Greeks, they aren't inclined to move to another new location, start over, and learn another new language and customs. Despite this wariness, they've made tentative contact with members of the Masters of Colchis, who have been willing to trade knowledge regarding their scientific and mathematical achievements. Their rapport with groups from abroad, such as the Scribes of the Shell and the Vines of Ilmuqah, is much friendlier.

USING CHILDREN OF THE MIRROR IN YOUR GAME

The Children of the Mirror can work well as foils for a lot of the Mediterranean-based Colleges. They're polytheistic and came from an advanced society for the time — and could share some of that information if only there hadn't been so many terrible misunderstandings when they first arrived. Their origins aren't widely known outside the Counter Society.

The Children of the Mirror are good for adding a magic-themed antagonist to your game. Perhaps the characters inadvertently find themselves in the middle of one of the many feuds the Children of the Mirror have, possibly getting dragged in by their own Colleges.

They're cautiously willing to aid characters who help and accept them. As a group, they don't offer trust easily; that's been burned too many times. If presented as potential allies, the Children of the Mirror are likely to test the characters' trustworthiness, and their approaches won't always be overt. They could give the characters coveted information to see what the characters do with it, create false secrets, use Inspired powers, or other methods depending on the individuals the characters interact with.



CHAPTER THREE

INSPIRED CHARACTERS

Find, and fulfill your destiny!
—Zeus, Clash of the Titans

Many witnesses recorded what they saw the night sky chariot fell: scholars compared notes with colleagues in far-off places, poets composed odes about the golden flashes streaking across the sky, and politicians and philosophers discussed what it might portend. Painters attempted to capture it in frescoes and sculptors carved figures who were reaching for a piece of the falling star. While countless people witnessed the event, a fraction of them were irrevocably changed by contact with the sky chariot's wreckage and the strange golden liquid — called ambrosia — that leaked from it.

Citizens of the ancient world were no strangers to heroes and monsters, and many cultures believed individuals had the power to divine the future, heal the sick, or intercede with the gods on the people's behalf. These individuals — and perhaps the gods themselves — may have been Inspired, but there's no question that the starfall event ushered in a new era of Inspiration.

Over the last decade, those Champions, Oracles, and Olympians who gained incredible new powers from their exposure to ambrosia have left their mark on the world. They're adventures, explorers, scholars, scientists, soothsayers, soldiers, and more. Ambrosia transforms people with no regard for their station in life, choosing peasants and kings alike.

This chapter outlines each group's origins in the days, weeks, and months after that fateful night. It offers advice for players and Storyguides, both for portraying the characters' different power levels, and ideas for introducing them in your game. Your characters may set out to change the world and history as we know it, or interact with legendary heroes, reenact your players' favorite myths, or forge their own epic tales.

THE SKY CHARIOT'S FALL

The term "sky chariot" is one adopted by contemporary witnesses throughout the world, though other names may be used depending on what locals decided they saw. In some places, people believed the stars themselves had fallen, or decreed the streaks across the sky came from a great heavenly beast raking its claws across the firmament, or any number of other explanations.

INSPIRATION

Inspiration refers to an Inspired character's ability to harness and control ambrosia's fate-twisting energy, and the capacity at which they wield it. With it, they are capable of amazing, superhuman feats.

Characters in **Trinity Continuum: Aegis** gain their abilities through contact with ambrosia. This may be through a deliberate action such as bathing in a pool of it, receiving a sip during a ritual, eating foods infused with it, or stepping into a shaft of light where golden particles dance. Characters can also experience ambrosia's effects without understanding what it is they've encountered.

Players should determine when their characters first came into contact with ambrosia, and what that experience entailed. Did the character know what it was when she cupped some in her hands and drank it? Did she work long and hard to prove her worth to a College's members, and access to ambrosia was a reward for years of study and service? Or was she a soldier who staggered wounded from the battlefield, and closed her eyes certain she'd bleed out by morning only to awaken healed and stronger than she'd ever been? Consider how the character explains the event to herself. She may believe she drank the nectar of the gods, or bathed in starlight, or heard the Muses singing to her and was forever changed.

Champions

Humanity has always had heroes. Back to the first stories recited around nighttime fires, back to the first figures inscribed upon cave walls, and back further still, disappearing into mysterious darkness that the first people walked from. But eventually humanity's heroes carried food to feed the many in cleverly woven baskets instead of overfull hands; eventually they raised knives of flint and fire-hardened lances to hunt and drive off the beasts of the land. Possibilities expanded as civilizations grew. Cities flourished. Explorers set sail, their ships first hugging the coast, then venturing farther out to sea. New inventions made life easier and made it possible for people to survive grievous injuries and live longer. Trade with far away nations expanded artists' techniques, brought different foods and spices to the table, and introduced an array of pigments, raw materials, and fabrics to crafters of all kinds. Inspired to greater and greater things, new heroes' stories echoed even more loudly than those of their predecessors.

Even as war and disaster forced Greece and other Mediterranean civilizations into their Dark Age, heroes gave despairing citizens reason to hope. They defended city walls from attackers and led civilians to safety. When food supplies ran low, they ventured into the wilderness to hunt and gather, no matter how hunger gnawed at their own bellies. Even if all else seemed lost,

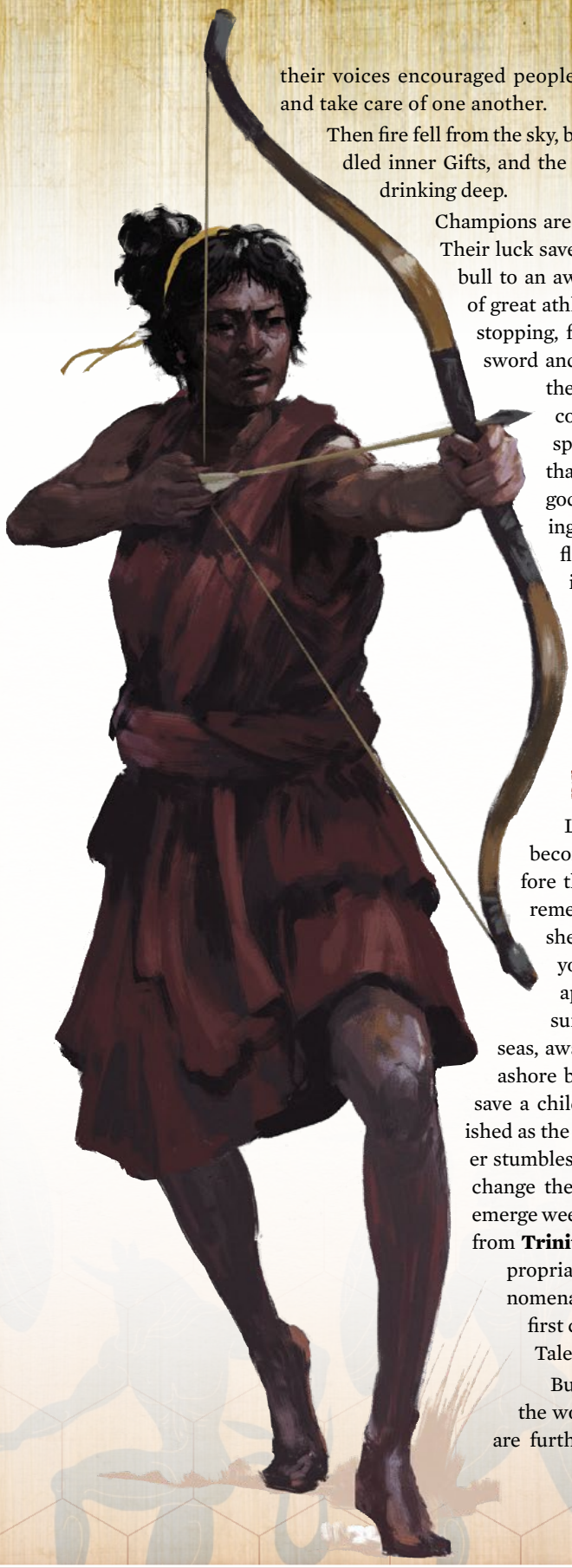
Clytie, Wide Roaming

The only child born to long suffering shepherds, Clytie transformed from a querulous, raggedy youth ever the trouble of her parents to a young woman of clear eyes and graceful limbs...who was even more trouble for her relatives in her pastoral community. Even as Clytie drove off increasingly stranger and more monstrous beasts, her habit of falling into torrid-and-ultimately-doomed love affairs with every hero, prince, or doe-eyed priestess who wandered through the area brought on its own kind of trouble. Her family sighed with relief when she set off to explore the world. Since then, Clytie has been involved in, and occasionally been the primary cause of, major conflicts from the shores of the Mediterranean to beyond the limits of Anatolia. Her incredible knack for heroic combat and daring deeds is matched only by her ability to fall in love with whoever will cause the most problems in her immediate future.

Champions are often aware that they are now different, and recognize their potential to impact the world even if they don't know what exactly has changed about them. Some credit their newfound abilities to fate, and seek to fulfill or surmount what they perceive as their destiny. Others attribute it to the will of the gods, and work to honor, propitiate, or emulate them. The comfortable and self-assured may ascribe their newfound abilities to superior birth or other supernatural musings, using it to justify their actions. Many test their own limits as they try to fit their Gifts into their philosophical understanding of the world. Most characters experience a moment where they realize their extraordinary luck has to be more than simple coincidence or the gods' passive blessings. They draw on hidden reserves, pull through an impossible situation unscathed, or have the type of revelation that leaves their mind reeling with the scope of their insight. This experience, the sudden *knowing*, rocks them to their very core.

Then they dust themselves off and set about deciding how they can use their Gifts to change the world.

Of course, the rest of the world has also noticed the rise of new Champions. Conquering generals and ambitious leaders often claim an age of heroes has begun, but not since Greece's Golden Age have they been so evident. Champions stride through the world with a weight and presence that's impossible to ignore.



their voices encouraged people to keep going, hold on a little longer, and take care of one another.

Then fire fell from the sky, bringing with it the golden liquid that kindled inner Gifts, and the first Champions opened their eyes after drinking deep.

Champions are Inspired individuals favored by fortune. Their luck saves them from anything from a rampaging bull to an awkward social situation. They're capable of great athletic prowess, running for hours without stopping, faster than any of their peers. They heft sword and shield against enemies that tower over them or take on legions single-handedly and come out the victor. Champion artists inspire with their works, creating paintings that evoke profound emotion, capturing the gods' voices with their poetry, and sculpting statues that seem to be living, breathing flesh. Their clever thinking calms raging minotaurs, wins a lover's heart or a goddess's forgiveness, or expands the breadth of human potential with new mathematical equations and philosophical theories.

Moments of Inspiration

Like Inspired in other eras, Champions become something *more* than they were before through any number of events: a woman remembers the moment of her birth, when she was wrapped in a suffocating caul. Her young life was saved only by the chance appearance of a lost midwife. A sailor survives a horrific storm and murderous seas, awakening to find themselves rudely rolled ashore by gleaming surf. A farmer intervenes to save a child in the path of an enraged bull, astonished as the animal grows calm at his touch. A traveler stumbles into a strange cave, seeing wonders that change the course of their life before they finally emerge weeks later. Any of the sources of Inspiration from **Trinity Continuum Core** (p. 156-158) are appropriate for Champions. While the two phenomena aren't the same, a Champion character's first contact with ambrosia can be much like a Talent's exposure to Flux.

But so widely has ambrosia transformed the world of Aegis that Champions themselves are further transformed, their greatest qualities

SOLON THE ELDER

Solon would rather make toys for his grandchildren: tiny wooden ships that make their own wind; baby-dolls that snuggle toward warmth; soft cloth sheep that bleat when squeezed by little hands. Instead, he finds his home beset by problems which only his creations can solve. Raiders come from the coast, demanding tribute; Solon drives them from the bay with a great mechanical beast. A monstrous wolf threatens the countryside; Solon provides the finest musician in the land pipes with which to lull it to sleep. His son's political ambitions threaten war, and Solon sighs; "There is no reward for genius but work," he tells anyone who listens, but still he designs new and frightful machines of war.

brought to the fore. A youth driven to defend his people and land — once cursed with misfortune and ill-health — finds himself hale and hearty, as if he had benefited from the best possible upbringing. A woman kept from traveling due to a childhood amputation constructs and maintains adaptive devices to let her cross the world. A would-be philosopher kept from serious inquiry by penury and debilitating headaches suddenly grows clear-headed and flush with ideas and opportunities for investigating the nature of the world. The caul-born woman knows her path is set with high adventure and deadly dangers, but she'll break her own trail.

MIGHTY FEATS OF HEROIC PROWESS

Champions enjoy all the benefits of Talents from the **Trinity Continuum Core** (p. 151-155.) They may Dramatically Edit, purchase Inspired Gifts, and benefit from Facets, but ambrosial changes push them even further. Their Gifts reflect greater abilities, and their Dramatic Editing options (p. XX) go beyond those of Talents. Furthermore, their awareness of their ability to affect probability is greater, even if they can't explain how exactly they're manipulating it. No matter what name they give to the outrageous fortune and endless possibility that defines their life, a Champion understands on some level what it means to have a measure of control over fate. They also come to learn the responsibilities and burdens that come with such power. When a Champion swears a Mighty Oath, they feel the weight of their promise long after the words fade from the air. The Twists of Fate they're subjected to are more than mundane humanity must contest with. They have only to look to stories of Golden Age heroes to be wary of the tragedies that come about from attempting to thwart fate.

Like Talents, Champions lead interesting and heroic lives. Their drive to pursue strange possibilities, to adventure beyond the horizon, and to challenge the unconquerable separates them from their fellows. Many test their abilities to the limits, whether in battle, exploration, art, or other endeavors, and recognize that their abilities surpass those of their peers. They recognize that they have the potential to shape the world. Such experiments result in abilities and creations such as invocations to the Morai (p. XX), Gifts such as Nike's Chosen (p. XX), and artifacts such as the Songbird's Chorus (p. XX).

Those Champions and philosophers who reflect on such things recognize Gifts as products of the Champion's ability to connect with, channel, or be favored by an outside force, whether they call it godly intervention, the movement of fate, or dynamism.

Champions are often drawn to strange events and places. Close to home, they safeguard the ambrosia pools and caverns around Mount Olympus. They travel farther afield, attempting to mediate conflicts between Oracles and thinking beasts in the far reaches of Aegyptus. When word reaches them of the tyrannical acts of King Agron, a Champion feels certain they can put an end to his reign. Even mighty Atlantis, bloated with hubris and the mastery of orichalcum, cannot be completely rid of tenacious heroes meddling in its interests.

These travels may happen through the regular course of play, Dramatic Editing, or Twists of Fate as heroic journeys carry adventurers to the most distant earthly locations and potentially to the borders of other realms. While such situations and locations may ultimately prove fatal to Champions, getting there in the first place is rarely an issue, though fate might make the journey more interesting.

ODYSSEUS THE CUNNING, KING OF ITHACA

Who can forget brave and clever Odysseus, whose cunning broke the walls of Troy? Skillful in war, renowned for deeds with spear and shield as well as wise counsel and keen wit, any challenger he could not fight he could outthink, and any plan unraveled by fortune he'd challenge by boldness alone! Few are so storied and survive their adventures.

And yet many years did it take for great Odysseus to return to his loyal wife and child, alone and without those companions who swore their loyalty to him. Much blood was spilled to allow for his tardy return, and what dooms and consequences are pulled along in his heroic wake? Even for clever Odysseus, kingly heroism is matched with royal troubles.

Champions reduce the Difficulty of any necessary rolls to reach a strange or even otherworldly location by their highest Facet, to a minimum of 1. Note that this doesn't affect Complication; washing up on the shore of the mysterious island beyond the dawn with one's boat and crew devoured by sea monsters still counts as getting there.

FRUIT FROM GOLDEN SEEDS

A Champion's inherent Inspired nature doesn't fully owe itself to ambrosia, but their particular relationship to Inspiration is certainly mediated by the golden gift. Maybe other circumstances could result in Champions rising in other situations, but ambrosia has ushered their creation along *en masse during the time of* **Aegis**. Many are aware of the gift ambrosia has given them, and some seek to master it further, but further evolution or transformation must be by their own hand: ambrosia has already given them the gift of living as their best, most Inspired selves.

This isn't to say that Champions have no further use for ambrosia after that first contact. With access to the miraculous substance, intentionally directed diversions of fate such as invoking the Morai are possible. It also serves as an endlessly malleable and useful catalyst in the construction of wonders and raising of fantastical creatures; Inspired inventors seek new uses for it to power their creations. But rare is the Champion who seeks to glut themselves on it for gustatory pleasure. Ambrosia tastes like honey, but it's far too valuable a resource to treat as a mundane mead; for those who wish to indulge in worldly pleasures, many prefer unwatered wine, a fresh rack of lamb, or lovely musicians playing the pipes. Ambrosia is a tool, albeit one of incredible power and mysterious origin.

Oracles

Oracles are deeply in tune with the world and, perhaps because of this, understand how to look beyond it — whether that's reading their subject's fate, looking deep into the hearts of others, or reaching through death to pull a soul back to the world. They display mysterious psychic abilities such as controlling the weather, predicting the future, and wielding powers of transformation. Many act as trusted advisors to people in power, whether that's whispering in a queen's ear or advising a general on the eve of battle. They're revered priestesses in busy temples, or fearsome sorceresses living in remote seaside hovels. Wherever they practice their marvels, Oracles understand the give-and-take that such abilities require. Everything has a price; sometimes you declare what you're willing to pay, sometimes fate sets its own. Some destinies are beyond an Oracle's ability to predict or thwart, but this doesn't make them shy away from the power at their fingertips. It's a matter of knowing that if something is worth doing, you must also know what you're willing to give up to achieve it.

Their powers surpass the Champions' ability to manipulate probability, though while Champions have the uncanny knack of dodging the pendulum when it swings back their way, Oracles are more closely tied to the push-and-pull of fate. When an Oracle pulls on one strand, they see how it in turn tugs on those around it, warping the fabric of destiny. It's not that they can't or won't cause a tear, but they understand that eventually, repairs will be required. Their dire warnings to people who come seeking their services are a way of preparing the patch ahead of time. Only, they can't force a person to apply it when the time comes.

Oracles often literally shape the world around them. Combined with other reagents and rituals, they use ambrosia to affect changes in their environment, people in their vicinity, and even what a person's future holds. Their magic — or their manipulation of probability — can allow them to bypass natural laws entirely as they knit torn flesh, conjure violent storms, and lay devastating curses upon those who cross them.

When an Oracle uses her powers for another person's benefit, she rarely does so for free. Her expertise comes at a cost, and it's only fair to ask the same level of commitment from her client as she puts in herself. She may set someone seeking her wisdom with a task to prove their worth, whether that's an arduous climb to the rocky promontory from which she'll cast her spell, a quest to procure a rare component from a dangerous beast, or a riddle

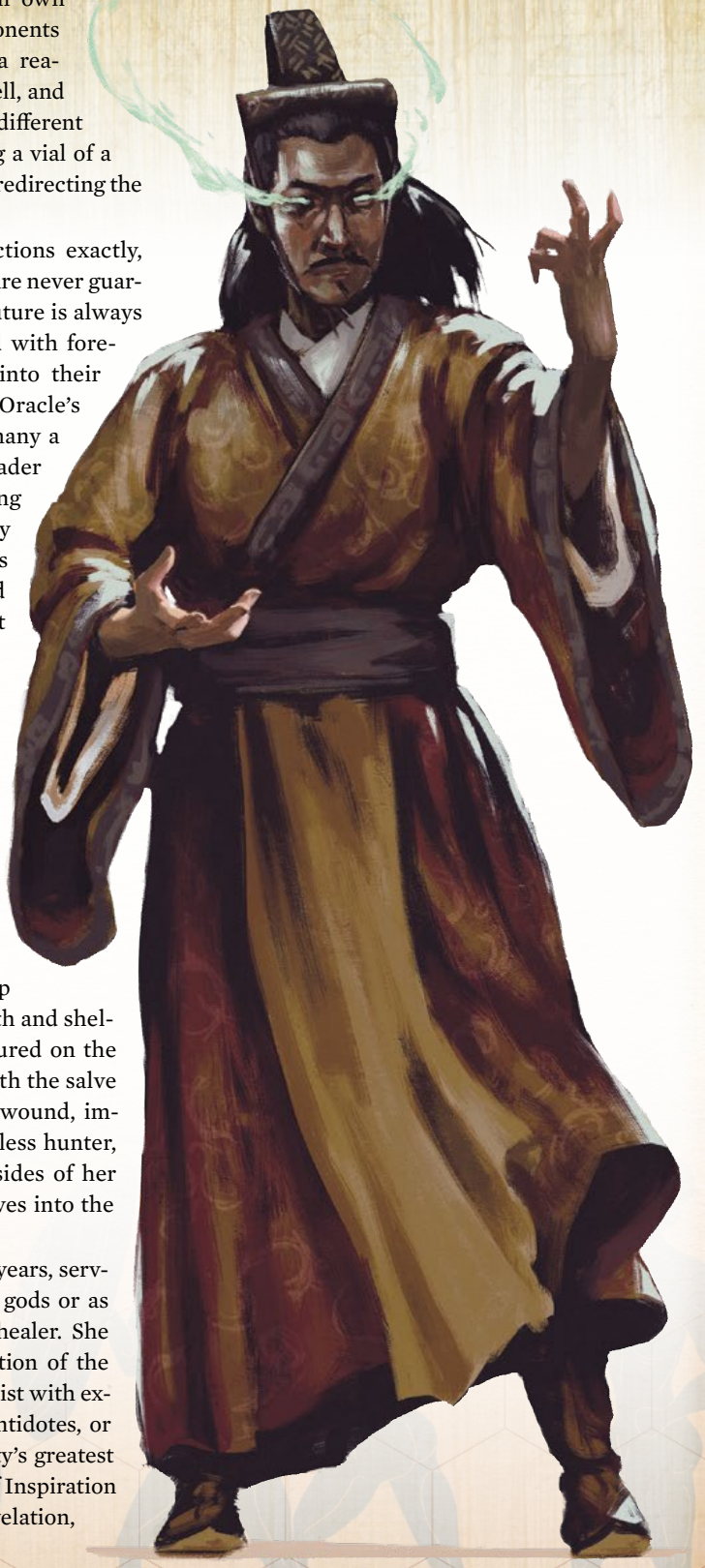
Cassandra

Born to royalty, sister to Troy's great warriors Hector and Paris, Cassandra was renowned for her beauty and intellect. Her keen insight and ability to see through deception should have made her a valuable asset at the negotiating table, but Cassandra's refusal to soften her observations and advice made powerful men uncomfortable. She didn't hesitate to tell them that their poor choices would come back and bite them later, which bruised egos and strained relations.

After a night in Apollo's temple, Cassandra and her twin brother received the gift of prophecy. While later stories suggest that the god cursed her so none would believe the words she uttered, many of her problems simply stemmed from the powerful finding her predictions inconvenient. Her own brother refused to heed her warnings about stealing Helen away from Menelaus — an action that sparked the Trojan War. Still, predictions were accurate, and she could see the future's golden threads spinning out ahead of her the way a knitter reads stitches in a pattern.

the querent must first solve. Petitioners who attempt to cut corners do so to their own detriment. The sacrifice or components the Oracle requires are asked for a reason. They help drive or focus the spell, and swapping them out for something different or lesser alters the results. Swapping a vial of a servant's blood in for a prince's risks redirecting the magic in fickle ways.

Even if they follow all her directions exactly, those who seek an Oracle's wisdom are never guaranteed clear or easy answers. The future is always changing, after all, and even armed with foreknowledge seekers often stumble into their own fates. Anyone who dismisses an Oracle's advice does so at their own peril; many a kingdom has fallen because its leader didn't like what he heard. Attempting to do an end-run around fate rarely works. The roads to Mount Olympus are littered with the bodies of loved ones slain by royals who thought they were more clever than destiny.



Moments of Inspiration

Often, an Oracle's Moment of Inspiration occurs under extraordinary circumstances and moments of extreme duress. Caught in the midst of a raging storm, she begs the gods' intercession, and finds that the winds and rain ease up as she wills it, letting her find warmth and shelter. When a friend is grievously injured on the battlefield, the Oracle's tears mix with the salve he makes to ease the pain and the wound, impossibly, closes. Pursued by a relentless hunter, the Oracle scratches gills into the sides of her neck with ragged fingernails and dives into the sea to elude being captured.

Other times, an Oracle studies for years, serving as an acolyte in a temple to the gods or as a dutiful apprentice to a powerful healer. She may be a scholar recording the motion of the planets and stars in the sky, an herbalist with extensive knowledge of poisons and antidotes, or a philosopher fascinated by humanity's greatest questions. In this case her Moment of Inspiration may come as a quiet but profound revelation,

THANATOS

A renowned and compassionate priest, Thanatos brought comfort to the people of his village when their loved ones passed on. The night the stars fell, he was walking home after having visited the family of a dying friend when he discovered that friend walking alongside him. He knew, as the starlight played on his friend's face that the man had not suddenly grown hale and hearty again, but that instead this was his shade. The two took one last walk around the town, stopping at old familiar sites and returning fondly to old philosophical arguments. As the dawn rose, his friend's form grew indistinct, and Thanatos said his last farewell.

Since then, it's not only living that come to him, but also the ghosts of the dead. They offer him wisdom, and in exchange he guides them to the Underworld. He has ventured into that realm himself, seeking the accounts of those who died under mysterious circumstances and even, occasionally, to retrieve the souls of those who departed too soon and return them to the land of the living. He's struck up a rapport with the somber ferryman and cautions those who travel with him to heed his warnings, lest they find themselves lost in Hades' realm.

or as a joyous ritual reflecting the culmination of her work in its present form. As she drinks deeply of ambrosia, surrounded by her teachers and peers, her eyes open and she sees the subtle connections between all things living and dead — what has been, what is, and what might be.

Oracles learn to view things not only how they appear in the moment, but how they might spool out into the future. She sees into the hearts of others, and can make their physical form reflect that which they are inside for good or for ill. This sharp insight and potent power can make them sought after advisors as they observe patterns not only in nature and the turning of the seasons, but in people. An Oracle catalogues how those in her care react to situations, how they interact with one another, how external forces sway the way they make decisions.

For this reason, many people fear Oracles as witches. To an observer, an Oracle's powers can be terrifying — especially considering they can raise the dead on the battlefield to fight for them, or call upon a ghost's aid. When they predict a dire future, it's rarely because their temper flared in the moment, but because they've seen the doom coming. They can't help see how people flinch from their presence, fearful of what awful predictions might come. This causes some Oracles to lead isolated lives, whether they withdraw to a tower in the palace or strike off for the wilderness, loneliness is preferable.

With Inspiration comes a deeper understanding of how events can have far-reaching effects. Even the smallest action can cause a cascade of events whose effects will still be felt generations later. While some may phrase this as "no good deed goes unpunished," or "things don't happen in a vacuum," many Oracles simply and instinctively know that their powers require a give-and-take. Nothing happens without paying the cost; whether they need to sacrifice reagents to perform a ritual, or dedicate time and meditation to a cause, Oracles do everything with a measure of care. To do otherwise risks fate itself intervening, and fate — or the Moirai — pay little heed to human desires.

THE PRICE OF POWER

The Oracles' power, to outside observers, seems mystical or god-given. What Oracles consider the price of power, or the whims of fate, is in truth the result of their manipulating probability. Their abilities are transformative in nature, manipulating weather, elements, and biology in ways that wouldn't otherwise occur naturally. So calling up a great storm on a clear day risks capsizing ally's ship or delaying a critical message from arriving on time, even as the storm stymies an enemy's fleet.

Oracles' Gifts often require a ritual or reagents to perform, and sometimes even rely on the availability of ambrosia. Often, this is a narrative device set to represent the sacrifice an Oracle makes in exchange for manipulating fate. However, for particularly powerful Gifts, if an Oracle doesn't have the proper reagents, time, or access to ambrosia to activate them, the Storyguide may elect to add a Complication to the roll reflecting an unintended

consequence that will happen if it's not bought off. On a botch, rather than adding Momentum to the pool, the Oracle's player and the Storyguide may work together to decide on a narratively and dramatically appropriate consequence. This might mean taking a look at the characters' or their allies current plans and suggesting events that might go awry. Short-term and long-term Aspirations can also offer good inspiration for the fallout. If other player characters are involved in the scene, they might also have fitting Aspirations that could be brought into focus.

Though one of their themes is sacrifice, the Storyguide should be careful not to make Oracle players feel like their characters are being punished for using their powers. Greek tragedies are full of characters rebelling against their fate and meeting it anyway; Oracles are aware of this on a visceral level, and consider their work as shaping fate or working with it, rather than constantly opposing it. Complications and obstacles should feel like part of the story, not random bad things that happen. If every time an Oracle uses her Gifts, rocks fall on her friends, the player — and the other players at the table — might begin to feel discouraged. Work together to ensure that using an Oracle's powers is a fun and interesting part of your story, not a grueling task.

Oracles' abilities are also exhilarating in their potential. They can transform their companions into swift-footed deer to outrun a threat, or call skeletons from the ground to fight at their sides. Their advice and protection is sought after and valued. Captains planning expeditions into the unknown seek their services to ensure fair winds and even the odds in a fight against sea monsters.

OLYMPIANS

To be an Olympian is to stand above.

Olympians are more than human; while young ones may still appear mortal, from the moment the divinely transformative ambrosia passes their lips, they are as different from a baseline mortal as a lion is to an ant. The story of an Olympian is the stuff of myth. Theirs are stories that will be told again and again as their personal legend grows and they challenge the powerful and reshape the world to suit their vision. Theirs is a story of epic conquest, divine odyssey, and riveting discovery.

It's also a story of ascension and growth, as the mortal-turned-god comes to grips with their newfound might. As they understand their abilities and wield them with more confidence, the trials of their youth fall like wheat cut by the sword that is their majesty. The world shakes with their footsteps, nations fall at their mere suggestion, and walls crumble with the slightest touch. However, this incredible power often comes at an incredible price: The life of the mortal you once were is difficult to maintain when those around you look to you as a god. An Olympian may find herself not only beloved by but responsible for more people than she ever imagined she'd meet, or she may discover those same people fear her instead; either way, her relationship to the community she once knew and considered herself a part of changes drastically.

Whether they discard their humanity with glee and abandon and embrace their role as a force of nature, or cling to it like a sailor thrown from their ship clings to driftwood in a raging storm, the outcome is usually the same. Just as a king walk around in peasant's clothing for a day but must eventually place his crown back upon his head, one cannot be both man and god forever. The Olympian will forever stand apart from those they once knew as kin, and that distance grows as the Olympian grows in puissance. The only question is whether she defies the gods of old and becomes a benevolent deity or follows the well-tread path of cruelty, envy, and pettiness of those who came before.

THEIR ROLE IN THE SETTING

Olympians are the superpowered badasses of the ancient world. They are defined by their unparallelled physical might, supernatural charisma, and ability to command the elements as easily as they control their own limbs. Olympians' powers are rarely subtle. Where a Champion could slash a soldier across the face or run an enemy through on their sword, an Olympian breaks their shield across their opponent's skull or flings their massive spear through three myrmidons, impaling them to a wall. While an Oracle summons a storm to strike their foes, she's still a step removed from it: in control of the storm, but not a part of it. An Olympian is the storm, embodying it as she calls lightning into her hand before hurling bolts across the battlefield. When an Olympian moves, the world takes note.

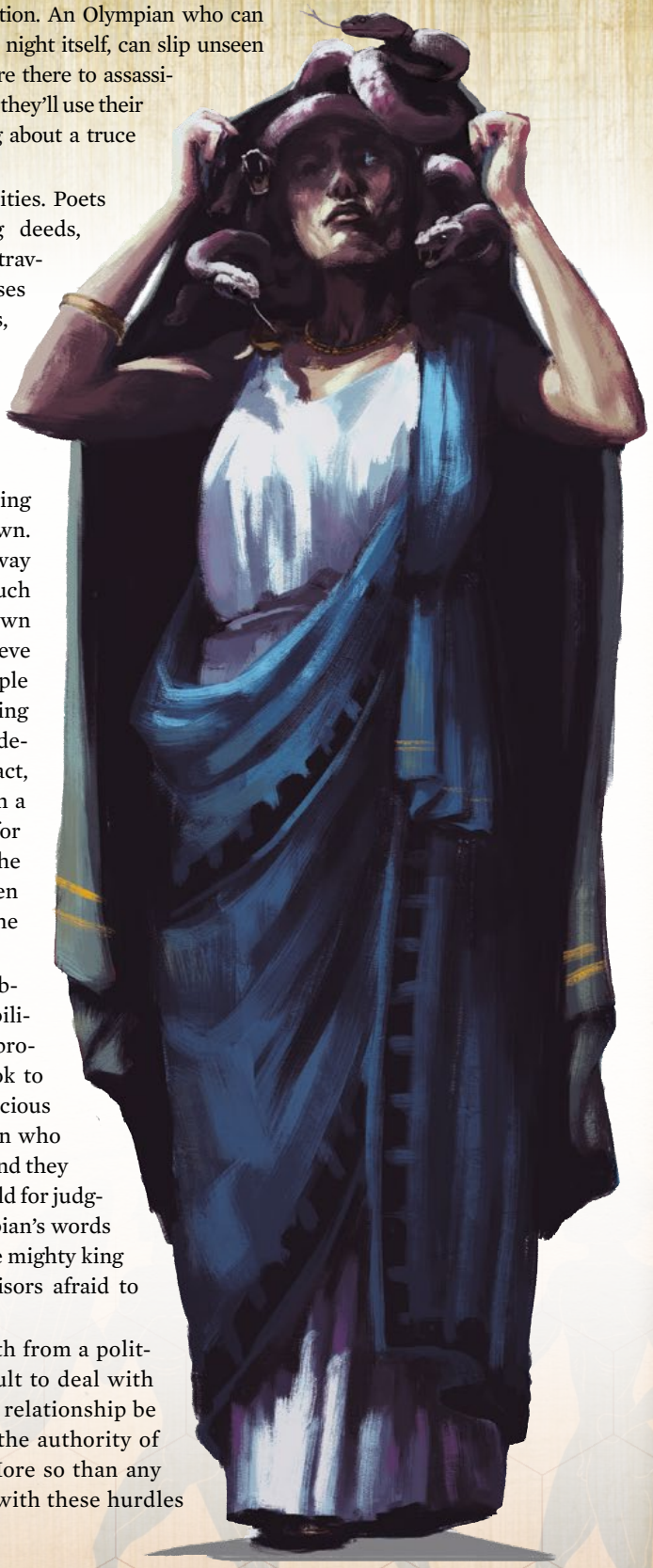
In mythology, Olympians' stories often echo those of gods and demigods. They can be wandering heroes on divine quests like Heracles, wrestling mystical monsters into submission and tricking the gods with clever thinking. They may be warriors in search of glory like Achilles, who not only shone on the battlefield, but whose undeniable charisma drew fighters to his side. They may be mighty kings like Theseus the Minotaur-slayer, or empire founders like Romulus. Some Olympians master a singular pursuit like the musician Orpheus, whose playing let the Argonauts slip past the sirens, and whose mournful songs stirred the hearts of Hades and Persephone themselves. Tales of Olympians' might in the Aegis era parallel or even inspire those of the gods in later eras.

Some Olympians concern themselves with the big picture and leave management and planning to the fates, friends, or followers. Their plans tend to be simple and straightforward: put me at the front of the line and the fighting will be over quickly. These warriors prefer to rely on their overwhelming might or the strategies and advice of others when things get too complex. Regular mortal soldiers can assemble into their formations, but what use is all that drilling when an Olympian's fists smash the ground and knock them all flat?

This isn't to say that Olympians are all brawn and no brains; they also count generals, orators, and spies among their ranks — roles that require clever thinking, subtlety, and the ability to assess one's surroundings

and companions and adapt to any situation. An Olympian who can move silently, wrapped in a cloak of the night itself, can slip unseen into a rival general's tent. Perhaps they're there to assassinate the enemy army's leader, or perhaps they'll use their silver tongue and flawless logic to bring about a truce when all other negotiations have failed.

Socially, Olympians are often celebrities. Poets and bards sing of their astounding deeds, spreading their tales everywhere they travel. From the first time the Olympian uses their powers in front of a mortal witness, their interactions with others forever change. People try to position themselves close to the Olympian and her might, whether for protection or to gain the benefits and authority proximity brings. Rivals and enemies spring up, intent on bringing the Olympian down. This may be because he stands in the way of their own goals, because defeating such a powerful person would boost their own celebrity, or even because they believe the Olympian's actions threaten people or location they care about. Wielding their power recklessly and sowing destruction can have a devastating impact, causing others to declare the Olympian a titan. Heroes looking to make a name for themselves come ready to challenge the Olympian, muddying the waters between which is the monster and which is the monster slayer.



Olympians who use their powers publicly grapple with newfound responsibility: people come to depend on them for protection and guidance. Mortals will look to the man who can punch a bull unconscious for safety. They will look to the woman who speaks with authority for permission, and they will look to one with wisdom of the world for judgment. Subordinates may take an Olympian's words not as advice but gospel. More than one mighty king has been brought low by useless advisors afraid to speak truth to power.

This ascent can be hard to deal with from a political standpoint and even more difficult to deal with from a sociological one. How can any relationship be equal when one person speaks with the authority of the gods and the other tills fields? More so than any physical conflict, it is how they deal with these hurdles that define an Olympian.

FOS

Leukos made his living breaking stones, searching for gems to sell for a pittance. It was back-breaking labor for a meager existence, but it was one he could call his own. For a former pickpocket already down two fingers, that was better than most in his position could say. He was inside a cave when the burning chariot began its descent. When he emerged, it was as if the midday sun was bearing down on him, even though the dawn was still an hour away. He prayed to Apollo to spare him, but Apollo didn't answer. A flying chunk of metal gashed open his head. His last thought as the ambrosia dripped into his wounds was that he wished he had done more. Days later, a man with no memory walked down a dark dirt road. He needed no torch, for his skin softly glowed, illuminating his path. He found another on the path, collapsed from dehydration. He healed the man's wounds with a touch and created his first disciple. The man asked him who he was and replied, "I am the Light."

The next wave of Olympians are those who saw the sky chariot's fall as a call to action. Some ventured forth to investigate the wreckage out of a sense of duty to their home, some did it because curiosity was their greatest strength and most fatal flaw, while others sought it out because they knew it would be the start of a great adventure. They journeyed far, overcame trials at the behest of their companions and newfound colleagues, and were rewarded with access to a pool of golden liquid as a reward for their determination.

As the ambrosia wrought its changes upon them, they had a vision of their journey so far. It was laid before them like a montage of their accomplishments, showing them how they'd earned this power. To them, this vision from the gods was a divine mandate — a stamp of approval on their life, assurance that they had always been exceptional, and that ambrosia's gift was their reward. From there, some set up shop on Mount Olympus or near the ambrosia pool they'd found, jealously guarding access to it and requiring any who approached prove their worth.

Others returned home to deliver the good news that they were, in fact, the son of Zeus, Zelus, Kratos, or whatever other deities whose mantle they believed they'd been called to take up. Others struck out into the world, for in their minds they had been granted a divine mission: their newfound strength brought with it a duty to the world as a whole. The power to shape the future was in their hands.

MOMENTS OF INSPIRATION

The world changed irrevocably when the sky chariot crashed into Mount Olympus. Olympians were among the most heavily affected by this moment, as those who were exposed to ambrosia underwent intense physical change. Incidental contact with the divine nectar rarely changes someone into an Olympian, though tales exist of Olympians stung by a bee that had previously alighted on a nectar-infused flower, or who walked through a gentle rain shower and emerged with newfound powers. Most stories however, suggest the Olympian's contact with the substance was as outsized as their powers: they drank deeply, filled their stomach with ichor, submerged in a pool of golden liquid, or injected it directly into their bloodstream.

Broadly speaking, three categories of people became Olympians following the starfall. First are those who were in the vicinity of the various crash sites. Those crushed by the falling debris that rained down with the meteor were, of course, unlucky, but those near enough to be injured but not killed awoke to find themselves mystically healed, in a state of intense euphoria, as the ambrosial fluid burst forth from the ground and flowed over them in a wave of gold. These first Olympians were gifted with some of the most dramatic changes to their physiology. These transformations ranged from the sort of strength that let them throw boulders like pebbles as they dug their companions out of the rubble to the appearance of powerful wings, lashing tails, sharp talons, and the like.

Caught in the explosion or the shrapnel of the mountain's explosion, they likely thought the gods were bringing the world to an end. Many of these first Olympians were inches from death, either from being crushed by debris or bleeding out from their injuries before the ambrosia flowed over them. They saw their lives flash before their eyes, but before reaching the end of the tunnel, they

were pulled back to life in a gasp of golden air. They awoke from certain death blessed with power they once only dreamed about — or maybe even feared. While some retained their memories, their closeness to death, coupled with the intense physiological changes, stripped from some of them all but glimpses of their past. They wandered forth from the mountain, forever changed.

Mechanics of an Olympian

The exposure to ambrosia made massive changes to the Olympians; their bodies are more muscular, their minds quicker, and their charisma undeniable. They are uniformly difficult to injure and faster to heal. They can do everything from elemental manipulation to leaping over obelisks to controlling the emotions of others. They get into all the trouble that the gods of Greek mythology can get into without as much of the celestial baggage.

Olympians' Gifts are often more overt than those of Champions or Oracles. They need not dance to call the rains; nor do they beg Zeus to grant them lightning, and they don't need to do pushups to gain the strength to sunder walls. They may believe their strength comes from exercise, their elemental powers a gift from the gods, or their knowledge of weather comes from being well informed. They throw lightning; they do not call it. They punch walls down; they do not ask them to fall.

While training can encourage certain Gifts to manifest, many others emerge in times of crisis. As a tempest bears down upon their people, they may find that their powers allow them to control storms. An Olympian faced with an army may find they have an infinite capacity for martial prowess. Any Olympian can manifest any Gift, but a mix of personality and circumstance determines which ones do manifest.

The View from Without

To the un-Inspired, the Olympians appear as gods. Even without the more dramatic transformations that

Cora of Argos

Cora was never content to take the path laid out for her. She was born into a life of luxury that ill-suited her. She trained with her brothers in the arts of war and accompanied her father on hunting excursions. Her eccentricities were tolerated so long as she bowed to the voices of her patriarchs in the manner of her dress appearance in public. When the comet fell from the sky, Tyros of Argos, a vile and brutal man (to whom she was betrothed), was chosen to venture to the mountain of the gods. Cora stole from the city under cover of darkness the same night as her betrothed and ventured to the mountain on her own. The journey was long and hard, but she found herself in one of the many caverns at a pool of glowing liquid, where Tyros attacked her and insisted that she go home and be his wife. Cora was more insistent, though, when she pierced his breast with his own sword. She drank deeply of the ambrosia and saw her life laid out before her. She had never been the child of a senator; no, her mother was Athena, goddess of wisdom and tactics. This journey was a test of her worthiness and one she had passed in spades. Athena bid her return to Argos, not as the passive daughter of a senator but as a goddess.

As the sky chariot fell, fragments of it broke off from the main body and spread far and wide. Debris littered not only the Grecian countryside, but the far corners of the world, from Scandia to Shang and beyond. Some lucky few found sweet ambrosia locked within these gifts from the gods delivered right to their doorstep. Farmers discovered pools of it in their fields. Kings who received word of a deposit sent their soldiers to collect every drop they could, demanding that it be brought back to their palaces so they could devour it or bathe in it, sparking their moment of transcendence. Noble and peasant alike viewed the change as a gift from the gods, a reward for their diligence, their vigor, their devotion, and in some cases their nobility. Alternatively, some saw it as a gift from a divine parent and began claiming the lineage of a god of Olympus and the authority that went along with it. The transformation inspired them not to make changes to their life but to double down on the person they were and become the best or most extreme vision of what they viewed as their greatest virtue.

Delta of Seriphos

Delta was the prince of Seriphos. When the sky chariot tore through the heavens, a large chunk of it sheared off and landed outside of Seriphos. His father, King Pateus, had the wreckage collected. He was there when they opened a strangely shaped chest and saw the golden liquid pour forth. His father took a deep sip of the ambrosia and was changed. Pateus declared that he and his family were descendants of Poseidon, and soon he gifted a bath in the ambrosia to all his progeny. Delta bathed in it, and so too was changed more severely than his father. His skin took on a blueish hue, and his hands appeared as if made of flowing water. The populace saw this as Delta being favored more highly than his father. Rumors grew that Poseidon wished Delta to be on the throne instead of the Pateus, causing intense jealousy in the king's heart. Ultimately, he attempted to put his son to death, only for Delta to show just how much more favored he was. Ropes of water appeared and dragged his father out to sea, drowning him. From that day forth, he was King Delta, chosen of Poseidon.

can be brought on by embracing elemental essence, Olympians do the unexplainable and survive the unlivable. The people of the ancient world often react to the unknown with worship and adoration or fear and revulsion. Olympians' allies see them as heroes, saviors, and, eventually, gods. Their enemies view them as a blight on the land, a mythical monster to be slain, or a tyrant imposing their will on the people.

Cults frequently spring up in their wake. An Olympian who discovers that such a group has devoted themselves to him might take a hand in shaping the cult, giving it a purpose and dictating projects for its members to undertake. Or he may choose to be entirely hands-off and leave the cult and its leadership to their own devices, letting the cult decide its own fate. Olympians who take an active hand in guiding their flock — including characters with the Fame Edge or a Role Path like Charismatic Leader — might enjoy a warm relationship with their devotees. In exchange for protection or blessings, they find a place willing to shelter and feed them when far from home, or adherents ready to join a battle in their name. Cult members might also act as informants and spies, keeping watch over their rivals' movements. Priests might act as caretakers and ambassadors in the Olympian's name.

Others may find involvement with a cult dedicated to them to be a frustrating and only sometimes rewarding endeavor, as their followers interpret their words into dogma, attempt to live as their patron lives, and curry their favor in whatever way they determine is best. Those who leave their erstwhile followers to fate may find their deeds attributed to a pre-existing god, or worse, being mistaken whole cloth for a deity of old, inheriting their allies and enemies alike. A cult left to grow on its own may diverge from the values of the Olympian they worship. For good or ill, their deeds become associated with the Olympian in whose name they perform them, and wresting them back onto the Olympian's preferred path can be difficult. As always, Storyguides and players should check in with one another when introducing such an element to the game, and always keep the safety rules introduced in Chapter Seven in mind.

There are advantages to having bands of followers willing to live and die on their word alone. In places where an Olympian's cult has spread, they gain a 1-dot Enhancement bonus on all rolls to activate connections. The Storyguide is the ultimate arbiter of whether a cult is considered active in an area.

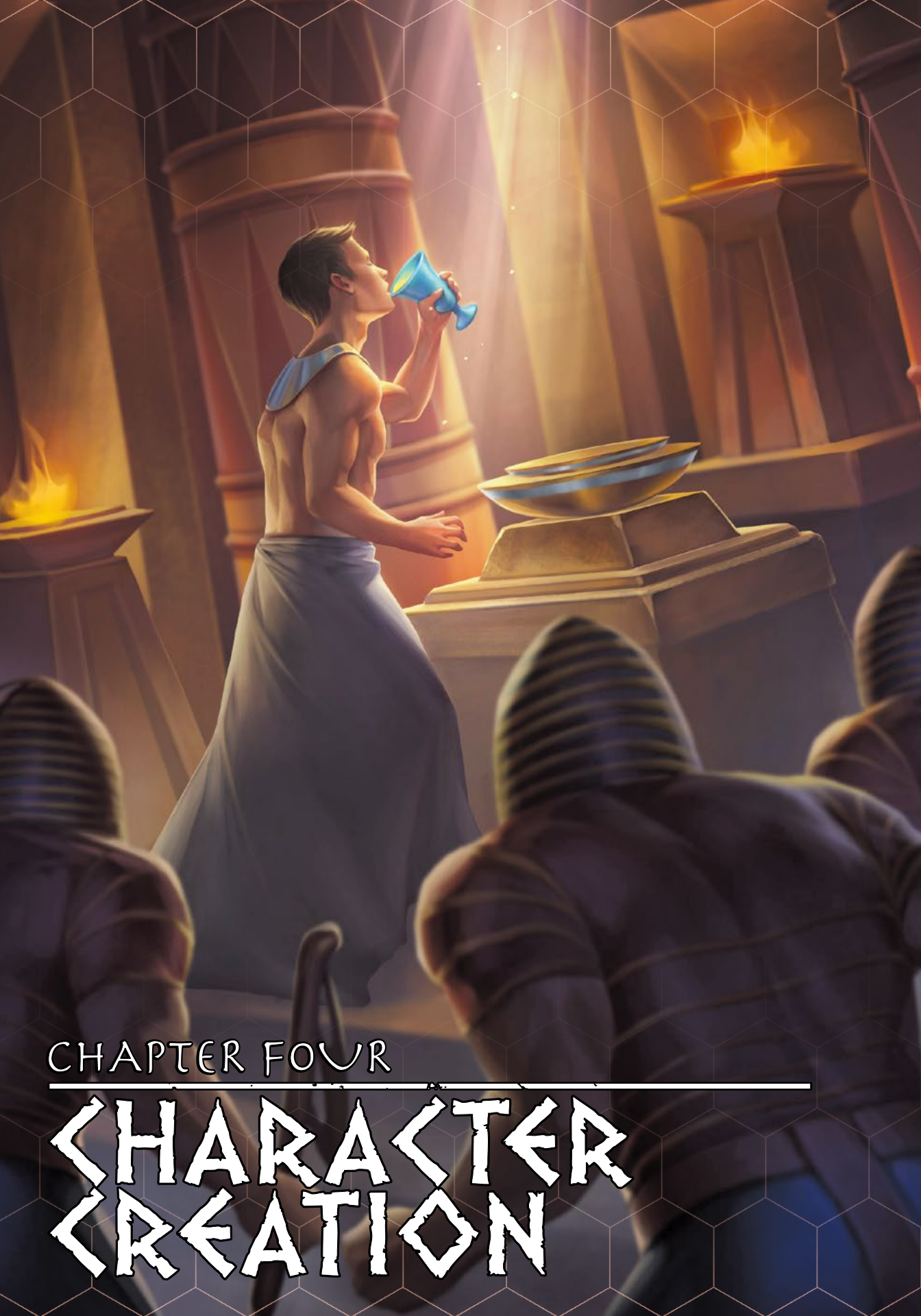
Olympian Advancement

As an Olympian advances in power, their body continues to adapt, evolve, and change. Changes can range from subtle bluing of the skin from mastering the essence of winter to more dramatic changes such as hands that shine like polished bronze from honing or possessing a shadow that moves on its own. These changes start subtle, but as they pile on, it becomes harder and harder for an ordinary person to mistake the Olympian for human. As they grow in strength, their Gifts expand in scope, and any problem begins to seem like one that their strength alone can solve, as their mind warps to match their body.

Among the different types of Inspired individuals in the **Aegis** era, Champions are the most common. They make up the bulk of explorers and adventurers, warriors of great renown, and many are scholars and philosophers throughout the world. Oracles and Olympians are rarer; while many can trace their Moments of Inspiration to contact with a large amount of ambrosia, or access to the wreckage sites on Mount Olympus and other crash zones, there are exceptions. Ambrosia can be transported to far-off places through unconventional means.

Interactions between the different individuals vary. A Champion may go seek an Oracle's advice before embarking on a journey to ask for a look into his future or negotiate for fair winds along the way. Conversely, an Oracle with a reputation for turning villagers who annoy her into swine or withholding rain during the growing season may find herself visited by a Champion intent on setting things right. Likewise, an Olympian can be a formidable ally on an epic quest, vanquishing them might be the point of the quest in the first place.

Most Colleges welcome Inspired individuals of all types. Some, like the Delphic League, naturally have a greater number of one type than the others. However, the opportunity to explore the world and exchange information on its wonders encourages cooperation within and throughout the organizations.



CHAPTER FOUR

CHARACTER CREATION

"I take my cue from deeds, not words."
— Aeschylus, Prometheus Bound

Great heroes stride across the world of **Aegis**. Those blessed by the gods — and other eldritch powers — leave stories of daring and bravery in their wake, weave myths of the world as they look beyond the mortal planes with their sight, and forge legends as befit the children of Olympus.

Characters in **Aegis** fall into one of three categories. Champions are mortals both blessed and cursed; many believe themselves to be watched closely by the Moirai, as the sisters assign great destinies, triumphs, and tragedies to these heroes. Like Odysseus, they make their way through the world with a mixture of luck and skill. The tapestry of creation itself twists and changes in response to their powerful fortunes, always ensuring Champions are precisely where they need to be to fulfill their destinies.

Oracles are touched by the power of the gods, either gifted through beneficence or stolen from them with trickery and guile. These wizards and sorcerers to create tangible effects upon the world, gross or sublime, depending on how they weave the elements into their spells. They peer into the future, or read a querent's destiny in the stars. They wield the power to transform flesh, granting wings to grounded animals, healing grievous wounds, or changing those who cross them into swine.

Olympians believe themselves the demigod children of the gods, or gifted individuals chosen by divine right. Some claim birthright via direct intervention, like Ares' daughter Penthesilea or Kleio's pedigree from the muse Hyacinthus. Others are more circumspect in their lineage, discovering their power through age and deed and divining their patrons from the powers and purviews they grow to possess. Olympians wield their power directly, perhaps with skin as tough as a boulder, the speed of storm-driven winds, the perceptiveness of an eagle, or an owl's cunning and wisdom.

Whichever path your character embarks upon,

Gods and Lineage

Despite Olympians' beliefs, they get their power from ambrosia, not directly from any pantheon of gods. While demonstration of their power is enough for most witnesses to agree that divine intervention has occurred for these individuals, how much this is true depends on the Storyguide's chronicle. See p. XX in the Storyguiding chapter for more detail on increasing or decreasing the prominence of these aspects in your games.

Character Creation Summary

Creating a character for **Aegis** follows seven steps, each guiding the player in deciding on the legend they want to pursue for their character — who they are, where they came from, and how they'll take on the world.

Step One: Concept

Begin by thinking broadly about the impact you want your character to have on the world. Are they a Champion following the winds of fate and seizing opportunity where it arises? Perhaps they're an Oracle working magic and commanding powers that the gods jealously guard for themselves? Or maybe they're an Olympian, directly bearing the legacy and blood of the gods and either living up to their progenitor's ideals, or rebelling against them.

Consider where your character came from before they started this journey, and what you'd like them to accomplish or endure. Note down two short term Aspirations for the character — situations or outcomes that could occur within a single game session — and one long term Aspiration that requires several sessions to accomplish. Aspirations can change, so don't worry about being locked into the ideas if the character evolves over the course of creation.

Step Two: Paths

Next choose the character's Paths — one each for their Origin, Role, and College. Paths outline where a character came from (Origin), what they do (Role), and who they associate with or which organization they belong to (College). Paths help define the people the character knows, who they can call upon for aid, and the resources they can access. **Aegis** has several Paths specific to this era, but most from the **Trinity Continuum Core** (pp. 41-44) also work in this period with minimal adaptation. The character gains three dots to distribute among the Skills offered in each Path, and two dots to allocate to Edges associated with each Path.

Step Three: Skills, Skill Tricks, and Specialties

Following allocation of Skill dots from Paths, each character has six additional dots to distribute among any Skills, not just those included in the character's Paths. After distributing these dots, the character gains a Specialty for any Skill with three or more dots and gains a single Skill Trick for one of their Skills rated three dots or higher.

Modern Skills in Aegis

Several Skills in the **Trinity Continuum Core** are presented with a modern, twenty-first century flavor, but are still relevant to **Aegis** with generally only minor review as outlined here.

Aim applies to hitting targets with any weapon or projectile that strikes beyond close combat range. Bows, slings, and thrown weapons such as javelins are included, as are advanced ranged weapons like the gastraphetes or the ballista. (These came later than the **Aegis** period in our world but may appear thanks to Super-science.) Should characters discover ambrosia-imbued magical weaponry — such as singing wands that project Zeus' lightning — these also fall under Aim's domain.

Medicine covers the intertwined mystical, spiritual, and physical theories and practices that healers understood and used to treat their patients. It includes working knowledge of medicinal applications of various animal, plant, and mineral components found in the world, how to prepare them appropriately, and the rituals and regimens patient and doctor must follow to ensure the gods facilitate healing. Many of these practices would be considered impractical at best and ineffective or even dangerous at worst, but during the time of **Aegis** they're as effective as modern medical treatment in a **Trinity Continuum Core** game.

Pilot is used to not only steer Aegis-era vehicles like boats and chariots but includes understanding of the workings of these devices and how to use and maintain the various parts of the equipment, plus how to repair it when needed. This Skill also applies to working with beasts of burden like horses and oxen — even elephants — that power some of these vehicles. Characters with *Pilot* have the knowledge to ride these animals without their vehicles as well.

Science includes various philosophies about how the world works and how magic, fate, and natural laws all come together to keep existence moving. Though scientists and philosophers of **Aegis** view the scientific world through the lenses of earth, air, fire, and water, they enjoy a good working understanding of various chemical and physical principles and can apply their knowledge to challenges before them as competently as scientists and technicians do today.

Technology relates to items, techniques, and materials of the time, but wouldn't be unrecognizable to people today. Various societies in **Aegis** know of gears and levers, harnessing the power of wind or water, or storing energy through torsion of materials. Plant and animal fibers as construction materials are common, but metallurgy is commonplace including working with iron.

Step Four: Attributes

While the character's Skills represent the areas they've devoted their time and attention toward, their Attributes denote the level of intrinsic ability to pair with the learned behavior. The player allocates one dot to each of the character's nine Attributes and ranks the three Arenas (Mental, Physical, Social) in order of importance for the character. Distribute six additional Attribute dots to the character's top priority, four to their second priority, and two dots to their lowest-ranked priority. The player also chooses

the character's Favored Approach to overcoming challenges, through Force, Finesse, or Resilience. They place one more dot against an Attribute within the Favored Approach, though this can't raise an Attribute above five dots.

Step Five: Taste of Ambrosia

This step sets the decision on whether the character is a Champion, Oracle, or Olympian, and established the circumstances of their Moment of Inspiration when they knowingly or otherwise encountered ambrosia and the miraculous substance forever changed their life. Despite the extreme importance of this event in shaping the character's destiny, they themselves may be uncertain or unaware of the moment, whether through ignorance or others concealing the truth from them. Alternatively, the Moment of Inspiration may be seared to the character's memory, an experience they can never forget — even if they wish to. Each Moment of Inspiration lists one or more Associated Attributes. Players add one dot to an Attribute from this list. See p. XX for example moments of Inspiration. The player may choose one from this list or create their own for the character.

Step Six: Add Advantages

The character's advantages raise them above the rest of humanity and make them someone worthy of legend. The character has three dots to distribute among the Intuitive, Reflective, or Destructive Facets of their Inspiration (p. XX). The player isn't required to place dots against all Facets and can apply all three dots to a single Facet if they choose. The character's Inspiration rating begins at one dot, and increases by one for each Facet rated as one, three, or five dots.

Example: Telegonus is a Champion to whom the Moirai pay close attention. Unlike his father Odysseus, Telegonus prefers to think through his problems and consider multiple solutions before acting, but once he is committed to a course he acts decisively. His player assigns two dots to Telegonus' Reflective Facet, one dot to his Destructive Facet, and leaves his Intuitive Facet at zero dots. Telegonus' Inspiration is three, one base plus one each for his Reflective and Destructive Facets reaching one dot.

The player now chooses four Gifts for the character. Three Gifts come from the character's Paths (one from each), while the fourth Gift may be any that the character meets the requirements for. Note that in addition to Universal Gifts, Champions, Oracles, and Olympians each have their own Gifts that can't be chosen or used by other types of heroes.

Step Seven: Final Touches

The final step is for the player to confirm that they are happy with their choices for the character and determine the last traits the character needs. The character gains one extra Attribute dot that can be applied to any Attribute, if it doesn't exceed the character's maximum (usually five, unless they've taken the Superior Trait Edge). The character gains four dots of Edges that can be assigned to Edges outside the character's Paths, as long as they meet the prerequisites.

Next, calculate the character's Health. Every character begins with a single level of Bruised, Injured, and Maimed, plus any levels gained from Edges or Gifts. The character also gains another Injured level if their Stamina is three dots or higher, and another Bruised level if their Stamina is five dots or more.

Finally, every character's Defense begins at one, which may be modified by Gifts or Edges.

Facets and Inspiration

Facets and Inspiration are core drivers for all characters in **Aegis** to show how they face and overcome the obstacles fate puts before them, whether they're Champions, Oracles, or Olympians. Facets express how a character prefers to face challenges, while Inspiration is the spark of inner greatness or touch of destiny that brings the character's intent to realization. A full description of Facets and Inspiration is found in the **Trinity Continuum Core** (pp. 152-154), with a brief description here.

Facets

Facets describe ways characters can respond to the tasks before them. The Destructive Facet represents direct action, intention, and purpose. The Intuitive Facet showcases quick wits, rapid response, and the

measure of Luck assisting outcomes. The Reflective Facet represents patience, planning, focus, and the application of Skill to achieve goals.

Facets have ratings between 0 and 5, with 0 representing an approach never used by the character, and 5 being the character's preferred method of dealing with problems.

Inspiration

Inspiration is Prometheus' flame that drives characters to push themselves against all odds. A character's Inspiration is rated from 1 to 10. Champions, Oracles, and Olympians start with Inspiration 1 and add one when any Facet reaches 1, 3, or 5 dots. **Trinity Continuum Core** (pp. 152-154) contains more information about Inspiration and its use. As an overview, Inspiration may be used for:

- Activating Gifts that require Inspiration expenditure.
- Adding Enhancement equal to the Facet being used to relevant actions.
- Dramatic Editing requires spending one or more points of Inspiration.
- Spending one point of Inspiration to increase the character's Defense by their lowest Facet for a scene.
- Spend one point of Inspiration to increase an action's Scale by +1.

Characters recover Inspiration by gaining one point:

- At the start of a new scene.
- As Consolation for a failed roll (in addition to Momentum), if the Storyguide agrees.
- Per hour of restful sleep.
- Per 10 minutes of exposure to raw ambrosia.

Moments of Inspiration

The heroes of **Aegis** find Inspiration through a variety of circumstances. Some Champions begin their journey after a fateful encounter or a lucky break opening their eyes to fate's expectations. Oracles may gain their power when being blessed to take a sip of ambrosia, it may have come from a breath of strangely invigorating air from a dark cave, or perhaps they carry the potential in their blood from a line of Oracles, waiting for intense study or meditation to unlock the power. Similarly, Olympians often claim inheritance from their godly parents and patrons, waiting for their coming to maturity or a moment of peril for them to earn their progenitors' favor. Others perform great deeds alongside demigods and receive the divine gift in rewards for the service they completed in the gods' names.

While the characters themselves may not know it, their powers also come from exposure to the mysterious substance known as ambrosia. They may knowingly partake in it, or encounter it without knowing how their life is about to change. Some characters strive to prove their worth to Colleges or other guardians of ambrosia pools, while others happen across it in the wild, or even dare to steal it from beneath its keepers' noses. How much or how little their first exposure to ambrosia informs the character's Moment of Inspiration is up to the player to decide.

In each case, the player may choose the circumstances of their character's Moment of Inspiration whether they're a Champion, Oracle, or Olympian. They may select from the examples in **Trinity Continuum Core** (p. 156), can choose any of the following, or even invent or adapt their own instance that changed the character from normal mortal to something greater.

EUREKA!

A dawning Moment of Inspiration in the face of a seemingly insurmountable challenge opened the character's mind to all the world's possibilities. In an instant, the character gained insight that there was more to the world, even beyond what the priests and politicians would have people believe. The character strives to build from this moment, searching for other opportunities of sudden awareness and inspiration, often drawing others to them with their sense of wonder at creation.

Associated Attribute: Any Mental

GOD-CRUSHER

Your character witnessed the actions of the chosen of the gods and despaired. Perhaps they found an Olympian playing tyrant over mortals, an Oracle cursing those not paying sufficient tribute, or even a Champion following his own luck without care of the toll it took on those around him. Whatever the case, your character listened to the stories of the gods overthrowing the Titans and understood this power is too dangerous for humans to wield, even though this realization stirred the character's own destiny to life.

Associated Attribute: Any Force Approach

MYTHOLOGICAL ENCOUNTER

The character encountered a creature of legend and lived to tell the tale. Maybe they overcame the challenge through luck and skill, or perhaps the creature was just toying with them for sport and a rematch is coming. The awe, wonder, and terror felt by the character, alongside exposure to the creature's strange energies, awakened the character's awareness of their destiny and potential.

Associated Attribute: Any Resilience Approach

STOLEN FIRE

The character saw their chance to steal a portion of ambrosia and took it despite the risks. Perhaps they collected glistening blood from a felled beast, quickly soaked golden liquid from a spilled cup, or raided a temple and took what belongs to the gods. Either way, using their stolen bounty forever changed the character's life.

Associated Attribute: Any Finesse Approach

PATHS

Paths define the journey the character has taken to this point in their life. Paths describe the character's Origin, the Role they take upon themselves, and the College to which they belong. The Origin and Role Paths described here supplement those in **Trinity Continuum Core** (p. 41), while the College Paths replace the Society Paths from that book.

ORIGIN PATHS

Origin Paths determine the character's formative years, with the following relevant to **Aegis**' time.

EUPATRIDAE (NOBLE)

You were born to wealth and privilege — and also expectation. Your family had a position of power,

and your parents frequently reminded you of the need to fit established norms of behavior, education, and profession. Perhaps you adapted to the pressure and became an exemplar of the family name, moving among the upper classes and walking the razor's edge of their games and plots. Maybe you rebelled and walked away from it all, determined to forge your own path, but you're conscious that just because you left doesn't mean the family's enemies will leave you alone. Or perhaps you blend both paths, portraying the dutiful scion in public while leading a rebellious life away from where society keeps watch.

Example Connections: Noble Families, Political Rivals, Disaffected Scions, High-class Merchants

Skills: Command, Culture, Integrity, Persuasion

Edges: Danger Sense, Fame, Highborn, Patron, Skilled Liar, Wealth

Gifts: Attribute (Composure), Skill (Command, Persuasion)

GEOMOROI (PEASANT)

You grew up as one of the common people. You may have toiled on a farm growing crops or tending animals, or in a larger community or city where you labored for whatever living you could scrape together. You learned the skills needed for survival at an early age, learning to hunt, repair your gear, and to look after yourself and those around you. You picked up how to tend to injuries and fight illness, the best ways to find shelter in an emergency, and how to keep your head down when soldiers or travelers came through the area. However, these wanderers made you wonder about the world beyond what you knew, and listening to their stories gave you the drive to see it for yourself and make your own legend.

Example Connections: Blacksmiths, Farmers, Traveling Merchants, Village Healers

Skills: Athletics, Medicine, Survival, Technology

Edges: Adrenaline Spike, Animal Ken, Danger Sense, Direction Sense, Hardy, Iron Will, Keen Sense, Tough Cookie

Gifts: Attribute (Might, Stamina), Skill (Athletics, Survival)

METIC (FOREIGNER)

You were born outside the society you're currently living within. Though you're a foreigner, you have a place among these people and an acceptance in their laws and practices. Your ways and customs may seem strange to those around you, but no more than theirs seem unusual to you. This makes you keenly aware of anomalies to the norms that would be missed by others, and your observations and outsider's perspective are valued by those with the wisdom to listen.

Example Connections: Foreign Spies, Integrated Communities, Travelers and Traders, Political Influencers

Skills: Culture, Enigmas, Humanities, Persuasion

Edges: Covert, Iron Will, Library, Patron, Polyglot, Striking

Gifts: Attribute (Intellect), Skill (Culture, Persuasion)

OSTRAKISMOS (EXILE)

Through birth or circumstance, you and your family were always on the outside of society. Your parents may have been exiled from your home city, or perhaps you were a member of a religious tradition that had fallen from mainstream favor. Maybe the community considers your lineage to bring disfavor from the gods, or they saw bad omens that you would bring calamity to the broader group. The stigma means you never feel safe within the society that cast you out, and have a difficult time trusting authorities from other communities as you're certain you'd be unwelcome if they ever discovered your status. Your outsider status gives you greater empathy and understanding for others also living outside the structures and safety nets others take for granted.

Example Connections: Forbidden Religious Leaders, Political Rebels, Society Outcasts, Sympathetic Locals

Skills: Culture, Empathy, Integrity, Survival

Edges: Alternate Identity, Always Prepared, Broad Knowledge, Covert, Danger Sense, Hardy, Iron Will

Gifts: Attribute (Cunning), Skill (Empathy, Integrity)

ROLE PATHS

The character's Role represents their profession, whether a legitimate trade or an occupation set by circumstances.

AOIDOS (STORYTELLER, BARD)

Others perform feats of heroism and daring, you build legends. You're not a delicate flower who relies on the comforts of home to compose their poetry; you desire the experience and thrill of the action to better evoke the emotional highs and lows in your audience. Often, the songs you sing are from your own adventures, sometimes carefully obfuscated, as audiences love the focus of songs to be larger than life and from afar rather than singing

before them. You love the attention, and you know how to work the crowd with your entrance, performance, and always leave them wanting more.

Example Connections: Legendary Figures, Performers, Tavern Keepers, Wealthy Elites

Skills: Culture, Empathy, Integrity, Persuasion

Edges: Always Prepared, Artistic Talent, Consolidation, Direction Sense, Patron, Photographic Memory, Striking

Gifts: Attribute (Presence), Skill (Empathy, Persuasion)

EMPOROI (MERCHANT)

On the surface, others believe the role of the emporoi to be simple: acquire items and sell them for profit. This may be the case for any lesser merchant, but it doesn't apply to you. You consider the actual transaction of goods to be the least part of your profession. Understanding people is the higher calling; knowing what they want, where to find it, and what it will take for the current owner to part with the goods with a smile. Satisfaction is what you strive for in every part of the deal, to know that your suppliers want to get what you ask, that your customers think to come to you before others, and that you earn a comfortable profit to continue doing what you do best.

Example Connections: Rare Goods Acquirers, Ship and Caravan Owners, Suppliers from Distant Lands, Wealthy Customers

Skills: Empathy, Enigmas, Integrity, Persuasion

Edges: Direction Sense, Lightning Calculator, Patron, Photographic Memory, Polyglot, Wealth

Gifts: Attribute (Manipulation), Skill (Enigmas, Persuasion)

HIEROPHANT (PRIEST)

You are the keeper of sacred mysteries and holy texts. You interpret the will of the gods via divination in its many forms. You hold arcane secrets and knowledge forbidden to others, and through your training and your gods' guidance distill what you know into parcels of information suitable for the masses. You may be concerned by the recent rise of new Oracles who lack the training and piety to truly understand the insight they supposedly carry, or perhaps you endorse them as an act of faith in the gods of this time. Similarly, your faith may be tested by so many more people claiming divine inheritance in this age, following their own all-too-human goals in the name of their patrons. Though you may suffer crises of faith in the face of these challenges, you also know that it is your duty and calling to ensure the people understand how to deal such upheaval, and that duty may require you to turn the faithful against such arrogant upstarts in the gods' names.

Example Connections: Clergy of other Gods, Faithful Worshipers, Pilgrims, Wealthy Patrons

Skills: Culture, Humanities, Integrity, Persuasion

Edges: Fame, Highborn, Intense Focus, Library, Patron, Skilled Liar, Speed Reading

Gifts: Attribute (Resolve), Skill (Humanities, Integrity)

KLEPTAI (THIEF)

Your activities make you generally unwelcome in polite society. You go where you're not supposed to and take what isn't yours. While the rich and powerful may view you as a criminal, that's only because they're the ones who make laws to suit themselves. Yes, you break the law, but when the alternative was to starve and die on the streets, you didn't see that as a reasonable choice. Besides, despite what some may think, there is a level of honor amongst thieves, and you and your peers are as much a part of society as the upper crust. Without you, who would the rich turn to when they want something acquired that belongs to an owner they deem less worthy? Who would the authorities focus their attention on if not for the lowly thieves? No, despite the calls for eradication of crime, those in power want people like you around to do their dirty work.

Example Connections: Beggars, Thieves' Network, Smugglers, Merchants

Skills: Athletics, Enigmas, Larceny, Survival

Edges: Alternate Identity, Always Prepared, Ambidextrous, Breath Control, Danger Sense, Free Running, Intense Focus, Safe House, Skilled Liar

Gifts: Attribute (Dexterity), Skill (Enigmas, Larceny)

PHILOSOPHOS (PHILOSOPHER/SCIENTIST)

You are fascinated by how the world works and applying reason to make sense of supposed disorder and chaos. No aspect of study is outside your interest. You observe the turning of the skies, extol the purity of mathematics, combine natural materials into new substances, and seek to understand the role of humanity in the great cycle of life. You move along similar great minds, debating your ideas with philosophers from far and wide, taking and synthesizing their views with your own to develop stronger ideas and better understanding. You are particularly

interested in the study of ambrosia and how the golden liquid turns so many well-regarded philosophical truths on their head. You believe that understanding the nature of the substance holds the key to elevating humans to the level of the gods, perhaps even usurping their place if they choose not to share.

Example Connections: Craftspeople, Foreign Thinkers, Metallurgists, Philosophers

Skills: Enigmas, Persuasion, Science, Technology

Edges: Broad Knowledge, Fame, Library, Patron, Photographic Memory, Polyglot, Speed Reading

Gifts: Attribute (Intellect), Skill (Enigmas, Science)

COLLEGE PATHS

College Paths, known as Societies in other time periods, represent the group a character considers their own, and the values they work to uphold.

THE SOCIETY OF THE LION

You belong to an organization driven to understand ambrosia and whatever other secrets lay scattered from the sky chariot's fall. You don't pursue this goal through some need to gather power or lord over others, your drive to knowledge is for the betterment of humanity and uplifting common people through these (possibly unintentional) gifts from the gods. You know the chaos and destruction that could befall the world if ambrosia fell into the wrong hands — perhaps you've previously witnessed such events and these drove you toward the College.

Example Connections: Commoners, Philosophers, Merchants, Politicians

Skills: Command, Enigmas, Science, Survival

Edges: Always Prepared, Artifact, Library, Weak Spots, Wealth

Gifts: Skill (Command, Enigmas, Science)

NAUTIKOI

You are an explorer driven to discover the world. New places call to you, the urge to see what lies beyond the mountains, on the other shore, or over the horizon. Perhaps you follow Admiral Electra's vision of mapping the entire world in detail, or maybe you simply seek the joy of seeing unfamiliar places, people, and cultures. You may be an expert craftsperson creating new tools and machinery to aid the journey or uncover new secrets, or perhaps you prefer to draw on the expertise of your colleagues and put their latest inventions to the test. Whatever your particular drive, you never pass up the opportunity to explore and see what's in the next town, hidden in the darkness of a cave, or what comes from hearing the siren's song.

Example Connections: Explorers, Cartographers, Inventors, Materials Merchants

Skills: Athletics, Culture, Pilot, Technology

Edges: Animal Ken, Artifact, Breath Control, Direction Sense, Hardy, Keen Sense, Ms. Fix It

Gifts: Skill (Culture, Pilot, Technology)

THE DELPHIC LEAGUE

You seek to guide humanity and its heroes to a more just age, where people are less at the mercy of cruel nature and uncaring gods. Ambrosia and the Oracles you call siblings give the College precisely what is needed to accomplish this goal. Unlike your close allies in other Colleges, you're not driven to study ambrosia for its own sake, or explore the world simply to see what lies beyond. No, you guide your actions with the goal to improve the world and work hard to steer others in this way as well. Some knowledge can only lead to sorrow, and some paths only bring ruin and destruction. You and other members of the Delphic League try to keep others from unleashing this misery on the world, whether they do so knowingly or with ignorance. If such diversion is impossible, you work to reduce and contain the harm.

Example Connections: Mystics, Soothsayers, Truth Seekers, Healers

Skills: Empathy, Enigmas, Integrity, Persuasion

Edges: Always Prepared, Artistic Talent, Danger Sense, Fame, Library, Patron, Safe House

Gifts: Skill (Empathy, Enigmas, Persuasion)

CIRCLE OF HEROES

You live by deed and action in pursuit of the immortality of legend. You throw yourself at challenges so others may sing songs of your great achievements and the good you brought to the world. The Circle of Heroes doesn't just welcome those who rely on their muscles; great legends also speak of the heroes who outwitted monsters and tricked them to be the cause of their own demise, or stars with silver tongues who charmed their way to empowering people to revolt against the evils that would keep them downtrodden. The best legends remind us that heroes shouldn't walk alone, and the Circle of Heroes becomes family who look out for one another and answer calls of assistance whenever they come. Besides, what better way to build a heroic legend than to participate in the challenges that only a band of great heroes can overcome?

Example Connections: Guards, Poets, Commoners, Adventurers

Skills: Close Combat, Integrity, Persuasion, Survival

Edges: Adrenaline Spike, Big Hearted, Danger Sense, Hair Trigger Reflexes, Hardy, Intense Focus, Iron Will, Tough Cookie

Gifts: Skill (Close Combat, Integrity, Survival)

THE FELLOWSHIP OF ĀŠIPU

You are a learned advisor, privileged to have received apprenticeship and instruction in skills of mathematics, medicine, and the arts of the esoteric. Yours is an old College with vast networks of masters and apprentices and hundreds of years of knowledge to draw upon. You may still be serving your apprenticeship or be a master with an apprentice of your own. As an Āšipu you are chosen by ambrosia, sharing an affinity with the strange substance, and gaining power through that bond. Ambrosia may even call to you in dreams and meditation as it calls to many others of your Fellowship. However, the study of ambrosia is just one intriguing element in a world filled with wonder and mystery, and you have much to devote your time to beyond seeking the gods' nectar.

Example Connections: Assyrian nobility, Nautikoi, Librarians, Philosophers

Skills: Enigmas, Humanities, Medicine, Science

Edges: Direction Sense, Fame, Library, Patron, Photographic Memory, Striking

Gifts: Skill (Humanities, Medicine, Science)

MASTERS OF COLCHIS

You are an inventor and crafter. You work to not just master the world through mundane physics and engineering, but through the grace of Queen Medea you have access to ambrosia and arguably the greatest experts on that subject in the world. You work for the love of your craft and the joy of honing your skills to perfection. You may work alongside your peers in Medea's workshop, or travel the world bartering your expertise and the fruits of your labor for fair trade. You find your skills and products highly sought after by other Colleges and find easy allies among many others dedicated to exploring mystery and achieving mastery in their fields.

Example Connections: Nautikoi, Engineers, Artists, Smiths

Skills: Integrity, Medicine, Science, Technology

Edges: Artifact, Artistic Talent, Intense Focus, Keen Sense, Patron, Weak Spots

Gifts: Skill (Medicine, Science, Technology)

SCRIBES OF THE SHELL

You are an emissary of Heaven's highest mortal representative on Earth, sent far from your homelands of Shang to investigate the fall of the sky chariot and the ambrosia it scattered in its wake. Through understanding ambrosia, you seek to discover whether someone stole the miraculous liquid from the gods, and if so, learn their identity so the Emperor can bring them to justice. Your other mission is to gather knowledge from any who will share it to send back to the great library in Shang where the Emperor collects all human knowledge. As the lands you travel in and the people you meet are foreign with different customs and expectations, you draw heavily on your knowledge of divination to aid your decisions and ensure Heaven and the Emperor keep you on the true path.

Example Connections: Librarians, Sages, Poets, Priests

Skills: Command, Culture, Enigmas, Integrity

Edges: Broad Knowledge, Fame, Highborn, Iron Will, Photographic Memory, Polyglot, Speed Reading, Tough Cookie

Gifts: Skill (Culture, Enigmas, Integrity)

THE SCANDIAN STORM

You hail from the north, traveling far from your home seeking the means to cleanse your lands of the curse of the risen dead who plague the living thanks to corrupted ambrosia. Though Sif led your people to discover a lake of pure ambrosia that has empowered you and revealed that the liquid isn't inherently tainted by evil, gaining the might of heroes and gods did nothing to ease the land's sickness, so you and your kin travel south to parlay and barter with other heroes and find the cure for this disease. You never forget your goal, but you are an explorer at heart and delight in the new experiences you gather in your quest. You are happy with peaceful contact with the people you meet but don't shy away from any violence or danger you confront. After all, death in battle is one of the highest honors a member of the family can achieve.

Example Connections: Hunters, Explorers, Blacksmiths, Shipwrights

Skills: Athletics, Close Combat, Pilot, Survival

Edges: Adrenaline Spike, Artifact, Direction Sense, Hair Trigger Reflexes, Hardy, Swift, Tough Cookie

Gifts: Skill (Athletics, Close Combat, Pilot)

THE ORDER OF THEMIS

You have the means and drive to do good in the world, and that's what you are going to do. As a member

of the Order of Themis, you're not interested in studying ambrosia for its own sake, or keeping your Gifts hidden from the world. Others can wonder why the gods shared their nectar with mortals, and whether it was gift or accident. You are intent on helping others and bringing as much positive change as you can lest the gods realize their error and try to take back the power.

Example Connections: Politicians, Nobility, Commoners, Magistrates

Skills: Aim, Command, Larceny, Survival

Edges: Always Prepared, Danger Sense, Fame, Iron Will, Small Unit Tactics, Wealth

Gifts: Skill (Command, Larceny, Survival)

THE VINES OF ILMUQAH

You are a diplomat-scholar on the road to seek whatever knowledge you can learn and send back to the kingdom of D'mt. You understand that people and cultures in far-away lands hold their own knowledge and experience outside that of D'mt, and gathering the wisdom of others to add to the collected wisdom of the kingdom is a path to enlightenment for all. You travel by land to encounter people and interact with their lives as much as possible, as the paths of sea and air are often devoid of humanity from which to learn. As one of the Vines of Ilmuqah you are blessed by that god via the small amounts of ambrosia your College has gathered. Yours is a path of collaboration and partnership; the Vines aren't interested in seizing knowledge from others through force, as the fruits of such tarnished knowledge are certain to be themselves tainted.

Example Connections: Merchant caravans, travelers, wandering philosophers, city engineers and inventors

Skills: Humanities, Integrity, Persuasion, Survival

Edges: Broad Knowledge, Consolidation, Hardy, Photographic Memory, Polyglot, Skilled Liar, Speed Reading, Striking

Gifts: Skill (Integrity, Persuasion, Survival)

EDGES

Edges represent special qualities, training, or abilities possessed by characters. Many Edges can from **Trinity Continuum Core** (p. 57) are suitable for use, with the following additional Edges applicable to **Aegis**.

BROAD KNOWLEDGE (•)

You pick up random trivia and useful facts wherever you go. Whether you engage in organized study, debate philosophers whenever possible, or move across different elements of society, the things you know often come in handy. Gain +1 Enhancement for rolls where knowing a random piece of information could prove useful.

CONSOLIDATION (• •)

Your character is skilled at bringing people together, finding the points of similarity in their differing views and working through areas of contention and disagreement to mutually beneficial outcomes. As long as a group of people are willing to entertain working together, they quickly unite under your character's influence. Your character grants the Feature and Drawbacks of a Camaraderie bond (**Trinity Continuum Core**, p. 87) to a group for a scene by spending a point of Momentum.

HIGHBORN (•)

Your character is a member of a prestigious bloodline. Perhaps they are part of a nation's nobility, a child of influential politicians, or even known to be descended from a respected god. Regardless of the source of their nobility, the character gains a level of deference from most — but also disdain from others who feel slighted by the character's family. The Attitude (**Trinity Continuum Core**, p. 85) of others toward the character increases by one, both positive and negative.

INTENSE FOCUS (• •)

When necessary, your character can focus only on the task before them no matter how debilitating the distractions. Once per session, your character may ignore all Complications or Difficulty modifiers for a single action, though if used for an attack this can't negate an opponent's Defense. You may declare use of this Edge after rolling and determining successes, but before the Storyguide narrates results.

PANKRATIAST (• •)

Pankration is the traditional martial art of the Greek isles. It is practiced both for its military application and its use as a sport. Pankration matches are brutal and sometimes deadly affairs, but also chances for

glory and fame. Your character has been inducted into the basics of Pankration, unlocking three new stunts.

Straight Stomach Kick: (1 success per dot of Complication) One of the most fundamental pankration maneuvers is the straight stomach kick. Applies a 1-point Complication per 1 success spent. This Complication increases the success needed for any physical attacking stunts by the rating of the Complication. The Complication goes away at the end of the target's next turn, even if not bought off.

Tracheal Grip: (2 successes) (Must begin the turn in control of a grapple.) Whether from behind, using the leverage of one's knees, or from the front, gripping down an enemy with the strength of Herakles, choke holds are one of the fastest methods to victory in Pankration. This stunt applies a 1-point Complication to the target. If the target does not buy it off, it increases in severity by one each round. If the Complication exceeds the target's Stamina, they are Taken Out.

Shoulder Snap: (3 successes) (Must begin the turn in control of a grapple.) Against un-Inspired targets, the target has their Maimed injury condition filled and suffers from a Broken Shoulder **(Trinity Continuum Core,** p. 107.) Inspired targets take a 2-point Complication called Dislocated. They take the penalty to all physical actions using their arms until they buy the Complication off and "pop" their shoulder back into place

POLYGLOT (•)

You have a knack for picking up languages wherever you go. A few rounds of overhearing others is enough for you to begin conveying simple, universal concepts. After a day or two your mind works out the new language works sufficiently to begin communicating with some nuance, and after a week you can speak it fluently with any accent you know, from your original to any you've picked up from interactions with others. The speed of your talent applies to written forms too, as the symbols just make sense to you. You automatically know enough of any language your character has reasonably been exposed to from their Paths and adventures. The Storyguide may decide that some languages are unknown to you due to being secret, remote, or that you other haven't yet encountered.

CHAPTER FIVE

NEW RULES

"Somewhere, something incredible is waiting to be known."
—Carl Sagan

Mighty heroes find themselves embroiled in deadly conflicts and pushed to pursue great deeds. Champions, Oracles, and Olympians alike send great ripples through the world with their actions, and in turn often find their destinies bound to strange or awful fates. Some choose to fight against the strands of fate which bind them, while others embrace the pattern laid before them, trying to thread their own goals or chance at glory into the final tapestry woven by the Moirai. Whatever path a hero chooses, the age offers many tools to navigate it.

Dramatic Editing

Fate and destiny are not mere words; heroes know that the gods and stranger powers often heap curses and boons upon the glorious general and the humble rural youth alike. Champions may spend their Inspiration on Dramatic Editing as outlined on p. 154 of the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook.** Oracles and Olympians access Dramatic Editing by using Twists of Fate, Mighty Oaths, Dire Portents, and Invoking the Moirai. Champions may also use these Aegis-specific Dramatic Editing Rules.

Twists of Fate

The sailor escapes a horrible storm through a miraculously lucky turn of the wind, only to find herself in the path of an enemy despot's armada. The prince escapes his would-be assassins' knives due to a nighttime desire for a drink, but overhears his childhood companion plotting further betrayals. The healer discovers the cure for the plague growing in her house's thatch, but the smell of the herb's preparation attracts horrid monsters. A hero may always trust fate to pull them along, but they may not always like where they end up!

Mechanically, a hero may accept a Twist of Fate when they propose a Dramatic Edit. When they do, the Storyguide suggests an ironic, unfortunate, or unforeseen complication that accompanies the Edit, causing more trouble for the hero even as the character's player gets what they want. If the player agrees, the Dramatic Edit takes effect, and the complication or consequence introduces itself later during the scene or session. Champions reduce the cost of their Dramatic Edit by 1, though they may not make cost 0 Dramatic Edits through Twists of Fate more than once per scene. If they accept additional Twists of Fate, they gain Momentum instead.

Twists of Fate should never reverse or spoil the original reason for the Dramatic Edit. The healer's fortuitous herb shouldn't actually cause the plague to spread further or cause a different contagious malady in their patients; the prince shouldn't step away from their soon-to-be-stabbed bedding only to run into different assassins next to the wine krater. Similarly, Storyguides shouldn't push for twists that players don't buy into. It's fine for Storyguide and players to talk over what sort of Twist of Fate is appropriate or enjoyable for everyone involved. If a player simply doesn't like any of the proposed options, they may always reject the Twist of Fate and either pay for the Dramatic Edit normally or abandon it altogether.

From the viewpoint of heroes and their contemporaries, such events are bread and meat of being a hero. That their lives are beset with unexpected boons and challenges is simply the way of the world, and it's what a hero does in the face of the gods' fancies that proves their measure.

Mighty Oaths

Anyone may be bound by normal oaths to a friend, fellow citizen, or potentate, but heroes determined in their course may swear even mightier oaths. Whether to a favored deity, the gods at large, the Fates themselves, or simply to whoever is listening, a hero who imbues their oath with full intent to fulfill it often finds the way opened to them... but also courts disaster beyond human opprobrium if they break from their course.

A hero may declare a Mighty Oath to accomplish any feat that seems reasonably possible, but is also challenging or difficult: "I will defeat the Spartans in the field and drive them back to Laconia," or "I will

Clash

When two characters use abilities (such as Gifts) that come into conflict, such as both acting against the same target or canceling each other out, they Clash. In the event of the Clash, each player rolls their character's Skill + Inspiration rating (or most appropriate antagonist pool + Source). Should this roll tie, always favor players' characters over Storyguide characters, and always favor the defender. In the case of two characters acting against the same target, the defender is whomever used their power first. If that is somehow simultaneous, then both fail on a tie.

win the heart of fair Patroclus." Clearly impossible or farcical oaths ("I will pull the moon out of the sky to crush Athens," or "I will swallow the entire Aegean Sea") are often simply a waste of character effort — however, sometimes they might provide interesting narrative opportunities if a player finds a way to make the metaphorical literal. For example, while the character might not be able to yank the moon out of its orbit, she may take advantage of a total eclipse to attack Athens under the cover of total darkness. Ultimately, the Storyguide and player can work together to determine whether a Mighty Oath is likely to be fulfilled, and look for chances to make good on the promise in interesting ways.

Storyguides should indicate whether an oath is outside the scope of the game and allow players to withdraw or change their statement, For example, a Storyguide might say "This game is going to focus on monsters rampaging across the ocean; you probably won't be running into the Spartan army, but the Tyrsennian Fleet's been raiding the coast...," or "Patroclus is gay, Clytie, so that won't work unless you intend to win him as a bosom companion instead of a romantic partner." Lackluster, overly broad, or routine activities don't qualify for oath status. ("'I will defeat every enemy who raises a weapon against me' is what your character was going to try to do anyway, David.")

An oath-taker spends 1 Inspiration and clarifies their goal out-of-character to the Storyguide when swearing their oath. Once per scene until the Oath is fulfilled, made impossible, or broken, a character with an oath may reduce the cost of Dramatically Editing changes by 1 to make pursuing their oath easier or bringing it to relevance in the current scene.

Champions who swear Mighty Oaths may also use Extraordinary Effort (**Trinity Continuum Core** p. 153) for free once per scene when directly pursuing their oath.

Should a character knowingly break an oath or work against its completion, they immediately lose all benefits of the oath, and cannot spend or regain Inspiration for the rest of the session, or swear another Mighty Oath for the rest of the story. This never applies if an outside force physically compelled them to work against their oath or otherwise prevented them from exerting free will. Storyguides should always warn players if a course of action will result in an oath being broken.

If an oath becomes impossible to fulfill — "The Spartan army was torn apart by monstrous boars; none remain alive!" — the oath ends without incident. Similarly, if the oath becomes outside the scope of the current story ("Well, Patroclus is off with Achilles now and you're exploring the coast of Africa...") the Storyguide and player may agree to end the oath.

If the character successfully fulfills their oath, they immediately regain any spent Inspiration and count as having attained an Aspiration for all relevant purposes, once per session.

A character may only be affected by one Mighty Oath at a time, and cannot be forced to swear one they don't fully believe in (or that their player doesn't wish to make) by any means.

Dire Portents

While Oracles see the future in all its possible variety and wonder, any hero may catch sight of the shadow of doom upon the world. The fainthearted flee or hide at its approach, but the bold meet the challenge to prove their worth.

Once per session, a character may declare a Dire Portent; both something they've seen, and the threat it portends. This may be literal ("Clytie makes out the shape of ships on the horizon; the archon's force will soon be upon us!") or symbolic ("Solon sighs as

one of the pots falls off the table and shatters on the ground; a bad sign for the Thebans standing firm with us during the war council.")

Once per scene, any character may Dramatically Edit in further signs of the oncoming doom for free, creating a +2 Complication for a relevant check ("The nearing conflict makes the fishermen nervous; if Clytie doesn't buy off the Complication when she's bargaining with them, they'll flee the area for the foreseeable future." "If Solon doesn't buy off the Complication when riding down his bandits his lance will break; another bad sign for the war council!") gaining Momentum when they do.

If the portent comes to pass, the character who declared it gains an Inspiration, which may take them over their normal maximum for the scene. They may immediately spend it to Dramatically Edit appropriate preparations they've made for their foreseen calamity; Champions reduce the cost of the Edit by 1 Inspiration, to a minimum of zero.

If the portent doesn't come to pass or is otherwise averted ("Solon's generous gifts keep the Thebans happy; all that concern was for nothing!") the effect simply ends.

Storyguides should be flexible when players introduce Dire Portents, and players should respect the tone and direction of the game. If anyone at the table objects to one being introduced ("Wait, the Atlanteans are attacking? Aren't we trying to rescue Tiye's lover from monster hunters *and* help Clytie woo that archon?") Storyguide and players should discuss and come to agreement about what's appropriate out-of-character.

INVOKING THE MOIRAI

Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos are the Moirai, goddesses said to oversee the creation of a person's life from their birth, determine its proper length, and settle on the time of its end. While the particulars of their identity, mien, and even number differ across the ancient world, heroes who dare can deliberately warp their own fate in ways that reflect themselves in these Fates. Some invoke their names deliberately to do so, while others embrace hubris and simply try

to twist their own futures to match their desires. In both cases, the potential benefits are offset by dangerous consequences.

CLOTHO

The goddess of spinning life's thread, of beginnings and increase. A hero may reach back to their origin and take refuge in the vitality and life of their youth. Once per session, a character may spend 1 Inspiration to ignore all Injury Conditions, negative Conditions, and other penalties affecting them for the rest of the scene (though new Injuries, negative Conditions, and penalties may be imposed). However, doing so risks losing one's concentration to heady memories of past pleasures and glories, and the next roll the hero makes suffers from +2 Complication, causing them to forfeit their next action if not bought off.

A Champion with access to ambrosia may heal up to their Inspiration in Injury Conditions as well.

LACHESIS

The goddess of measuring and determination, of destiny and one's lot. A hero may twist the thread of their fate, confronting who they are with who they might have been. Once per session, a character may spend 1 Inspiration to manifest a Gift they don't currently possess. They may use that Gift for the rest of the session (though must spend any additional Inspiration required for activation normally). However, if the character fails any rolls while using or benefiting from a Lachesis-granted Gift, they suffer a Botch instead of a regular failure, and in addition to the regular effects of a Botch also lose access to Lachesis and Dramatic Editing for the rest of the scene.

A Champion with access to ambrosia may manifest non-Champion Gifts, though in this case the Gift only lasts for the rest of the scene.

Note: Players interested in using Lachesis should spend time when they're not in the spotlight finding the Gift and page references needed for its use, to avoid slowing down play.

ATROPOS

The goddess of severing and ending, of finality and funerals. Embracing the surety of their eventual end, a hero holds nothing back, accepting potential destruction as the price of glory. Once per story, a hero may spend 1 Inspiration. For the rest of the scene, whenever the player rolls a result they don't like, they may immediately roll again and take the better of the two results. Each time they do so, the character suffers an Injury Condition that may not be prevented in any way, and may not be healed or treated until the end of the scene.

A Champion with access to ambrosia may choose to ignore all Complications for any roll, but suffers an Injury after succeeding.

AMBROSIA

The celestial golden gift that spurs heroes to ever greater heights and allows mysterious and terrible transformations, ambrosia is both an enabler and source of wonders and dooms alike. This section focuses on what it does in play, and uses what intrepid or foolhardy heroes can put it toward.

SHINING ORIGINS

Individuals who encounter ambrosia for the first time often find themselves transformed, as some part of their inner nature known only to the gods is brought to the forefront. Champions find their abilities sharpened, the potential for their skill and dynamism to carve paths through the world amplified many times over. Oracles' senses expand beyond those allotted to mortal men; their very perceptions form and shape the world and the course of their targets' destinies. Olympians see the potential of their bodies and minds leave mortal limitations behind, approaching the stories of gods and demigods. On its own, ambrosia will not transform a good man into a bloodthirsty monster or a wicked liar into an oracular font of truth, but may give the opportunity for those with such potentials to wield them.

The character's initial exposure to ambrosia amplifies their true self, and reveals the type of Inspired individual they're destined to be. After this initial awakening, the character's Inspired nature does not change, even with further or more intense exposure to the substance. A Champion does not become an Olympian even if anointed in a great golden bath; an Olympian cannot steal Oracular mysteries even through prodigious and wasteful consumption. However, certain Gifts or other abilities may allow them to temporarily access or mimic their peers' powers.

Divine Meals

Though its nature is perhaps best understood as being transformative, ambrosia encountered by a hero after an initial exposure no longer provokes such striking and total changes, barring Gifts or other external factors. Instead, consumption or prolonged contact with a cupful or more of the gleaming substance can produce the following effects:

- Feasting upon ambrosia provides sustenance as if a character had been properly fed and hydrated for an entire day. If suffering the effects of starvation or dehydration, those effects immediately end.
- The character regains a single point of Inspiration once per scene if they contact or consume ambrosia. Consuming more will not reap further benefits, other than the sensation of consuming the food of the gods.
- While it will not heal a character on its own, administering ambrosia while tending to a hero's wounds with first aid (**Trinity Continuum Core** p. 108) reduces the Difficulty by 1 and may heal an additional Injury if they possess enough successes.

Nectar in the World

Ambrosia proves itself resistant to contamination or adulteration by most substances. A pool or container of it can sit undisturbed indefinitely, awaiting discovery by some eager searcher or happenstance passerby. Powers that detect unusual energies or abilities recognize it as a substance of note.

Natural creatures often ignore or avoid the substance. Most insects won't attempt to glean moisture from ambrosia's shining surface, and starving rats often pass it by on their hunt for food. However, some individual creatures seem drawn to consume it. When they do, they often become transformed in the manner of Olympians, imbued with terrible power and shedding any fear they held of mere mortality with their now-abandoned form. So changed, many become great dangers to and blights on their human neighbors, such as the two-headed Thessalian Boar. Rarely, humans who encounter ambrosia while in particularly dire physical or psychic states are similarly transformed; something in the substance latches on to those fears, and the resultant awful transformations reshape the unfortunate victims as monsters.

Ambrosia's innate power leads heroes to instinctively understand its potential use for acts of creation and Dramatic Editing (such as in Invoking the Moirai), as well as being a powerful substance in its own right. Heroes who have encountered ambrosia can detect its influence on a person or in an area, even if they can't identify its exact effects without appropriate Gifts or powers.

Super-Science in Antiquity

In an age of clever heroes, Olympic artisans, and genius philosophers, it should be no surprise that wonders are unleashed upon the world. Champions, Oracles, and Olympians may engage in the construction and use of Advanced and Inspired super-science (**Trinity Continuum Core** p. 90-91). While the limitations of the historical period provide a different baseline for Advanced creations, Inspired creations may remain unequaled until the modern day or beyond.

Sharper Swords and Faster Ships

The technology available to heroes in **Aegis** is that of antiquity, seen through a heroic lens. Many-oared ships sail through the Aegean, warriors wield weapons of iron against the last masterworks of bronze, and pottery acts as both everyday vessels of utility and fantastic objects of art. Learned artisans with access to the best materials and labor can still erect great and complex structures to honor the gods or fortify against the ambitions of tyrants. Archimedes has not yet been born, but lost geniuses of the era prefigure his works, combining simple machines to move great weights and construct ever more complex mechanisms.

Building off this base of heroic antiquity allows master smiths to forge blades of surpassing sharpness and balance, shipwrights in Attic villages to construct vessels with swift keels, and cunningly fashioned pullies and windlasses to lift enormous weights.

Mechanically, this means:

- Improvements to existing technology require additional Wealth (equal to the cost of the basic item) to create, or the crafter must acquire equivalent supplies. One must have all the materials to build a ship before one may consider building the Mediterranean's fastest.

- Such items, whether Advanced or Inspired, benefit from the existing template: they start with any initial Tags and Scale the item they're improving has, minus any that offer general Enhancement, and treat the project's Rank as two lower (to a minimum of one) for the purpose of time between Milestones (**Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook** pp. 93-95).

- Advanced inventions generally shouldn't have any Scale higher than 3, with the exception of Size for truly massive constructions. Similarly, care should be taken when assigning new forms of mobility to Advanced vehicles; Flight or submarine travel may be possible, but should come with the Sluggish (**Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook** p. 129) or Slow tags.

- Advanced metal melee weapons should usually have one of the material tags, as appropriate.

- If raising a superior companion animal or ferocious beast, Advanced organisms cannot normally possess Source, Gifts, or related Anomaly Powers. Similarly, they cannot raise an animal's intellect to true sapience, though Inspired creations may be thinking, reasoning creatures if appropriate.

Brilliant Wonders

Inspired art and science produces wonders beyond the age and outside of ordinary human development. Atlantean forges craft mysteries from crystal and unthinkable technologies that threaten to warp the world, while geniuses such as Daedalus tap into unearthly forces to make impossible structures and objects.

While Inspired inventions can be based on templates of existing equipment, vehicles, or creatures, they can also be designed and created whole-cloth.

Mechanically, Inspired inventions made from first principles:

- Have no additional Wealth requirement, but must purchase every Tag normally

- May exchange points of Edges in order to increase available Tags.

The Means of Invention

The methods of Inspired super-science vary as do its practitioners. Some universal rules for super-science in **Aegis'** setting:

- Exceptional ingredients, including ambrosia, may always be used as a Milestone for Inspired super-science, as well as satisfying material requirements for higher-ranked inventions (**Trinity Continuum Core** p. 94).

- Oracles and Olympians may use their powers such as Demiurgic Pretensions (p. XX) to make up for the lack of exotic ingredients.

- While Champions lack the ability to simply will wonder into the world, they may instead make use of places of power, allowing a steady hand and clever eye to weave a cloak which renders one invisible, or a ring which protects against the molten heat of the inner earth.

Techne

The act of making a thing, of mechanical creation in its purest form is the font of many splendid things. Inspired artisans who have mastered their craft cleave to it in their creations, exceptional ability along with exceptional materials making wonders. An Inspired smith finds a source of impossible elemental bronze, allowing their skill to turn it into a sword that can slice a boat in half. An Oracle raising a great ship grows saplings in ambrosia-soaked ground, harvesting lumber fit for a vessel that can sail the skies. An Atlantean scientist and cartographer places carefully cut crystals of precious orichalcum into a painstakingly carved image of the Mediterranean, bringing a map alive with the comings and goings of Atlantis' many enemies. Many such inventions rely on Inspired craftspeople impressing their vision onto the world through their works, their impossible achievements fueled by ambrosia and other extraordinary materials or energies.

Icons of Enigmatic Power: Magic and Mystery

In **Aegis'** heroic age, Inspired Science encompasses more than refined and empowered craft and industry. Mysteries woven together channel, harness, and shape the energies of the world. Daedalus' works stand out even against the greatest mundane structure, while island hermits construct magnificent and horrible things from ritual and secret knowledge. Many would call their devices and abilities magic, and even future generations would be puzzled by these icons of enigmatic power.

It's easy for individuals from the Atlantean Empire or other established ateliers of the fantastic to dismiss those who operate in modes outside of their proven

sciences. The people of **Aegis'** time aren't stupid or addled with superstition, though. These traditions represent generations of different knowledge bases or individual epiphanies applied to Inspired Science.

Items of enigmatic power use alternative means typically based around ritual actions taken during the crafting. Their creators reach for effects approaching the numinous and sublime that pure material science can't replicate. In **Aegis**, these inventions often have unusual forms; ambrosia and the strange powers of the age combine to create objects that would be judged impossible by modern science.

Creating items of enigmatic power follows most rules for Inspired Science. Paths related to their creation are particularly important, and should inform the form and function of the items a character creates. A philosopher drawing inspiration from the natural world and an incantation-speaking priestess of Hecate may both devise a ward against harm, but the exact form the ward takes may differ greatly.

Enigmatic items determine their Rank and corresponding Difficulty, Complications, and Milestones according to the basic super-science rules (**Trinity Core,** p. 91-99). Similarly, all enigmatic items require rare materials or preparations, which may result in additional Complications for the creation process.

However, creators of these items may use Enigmas or Culture in place of Science for the Skill requirements for working on super-science, and Enigmas or Science in place of Technology for the action. Their mastery over internal mysteries of the self and their investigations of external mysteries of the world become the basis for objects with seemingly transcendent powers. Actions to repair or reverse engineer items of enigmatic power also follow these guidelines; the clever mason may have trouble using his knowledge of architectural principles and the strength of stone to unravel the Inspired mystic's danger-sensing sheep's bones or the philosopher's probability skewing equation.

Icons of Enigmatic power may explicitly have properties or abilities that appear to be physically impossible. Wings of wax and feather provide full flight; a fish's scales arranged just so allow one to breathe in the deep. They are not limited to the technologies of antiquity, but, like the Fishscale Thorax and Songbird Chorus (p. XX and XX) may offer abilities beyond even masterworks.

It's possible for creators of technologically oriented super-science and enigmatically powerful artifacts to make wonders together; the Inspired are capable of great feats, after all! Working in unison, enigmatic creators and technological inventors can reforge items from one tradition to partake of both, or even create unified works whole-cloth. Doing so allows members of both traditions to work to repair and maintain the resulting wonders, while making it difficult for others to reverse engineer the projects unless they have access to both skillsets.

On the Raising of Monsters

From loyal hounds and companion horses to beasts that shake the earth with their footsteps, Inspired super-science can produce all manner of organisms.

- To begin the process, the would-be creator needs either a young creature to raise to adulthood, an additional unusual ingredient or dose of ambrosia to help transform an adult animal, or access to wonders that can create life from other substances, such as Echidna's vats.

- The creature's template is based on the Rank of the organism created, calculating its base values. However, Edges, Gifts, and Anomaly Powers must be selected as per the super-science Rank. So, a Rank 3 creation would use the base values for a Moderate Threat, but its creator would divide Edges, Gifts, and Anomaly Powers from its budget as a Rank 3 super-science invention.

  Rank 1: Minor Threat

  Rank 2: Medium Threat

  Rank 3: Follower (p. XX), Moderate Threat

  Rank 4: Major Threat

  Rank 5: Colossal Threat

- For creatures based on threat templates, the creator picks two actions each for the organism's primary and secondary pools. Inherent Enhancement should be split between single actions in its pools, to a maximum of +3 for any one action.

- For Followers, creators assign points and abilities as per regular Follower creation on page XX.

- Assign additional Edges, Gifts, or Anomaly Powers based on the super-science level of their creature.

- Always specify the circumstances of any Scale granted. A wind-swift bird might gain Speed

Scale for flying, while a truly enormous hog might benefit from Size Scale.

- Flaws applied to the organism may affect its behavior (a Jinxed steed simply refuses to allow a rider unless Momentum is spent), or its physical nature (a bull with a bellyful of unnatural fire explodes due to its self-destructive flaw when its master botches a roll to send it against the enemy). Players and Storyguides should discuss and agree which each flaw applies to before play begins.

- Unless mistreated, organisms normally follow their creator's desires to the best of their understanding and ability. If abused or repeatedly poorly treated, this bond is broken and they become unpredictable and dangerous.

NEW CRAFTING STUNTS

Characters may use leftover successes on Milestone rolls to buy these crafting Stunts as normal.

A TRUE BOND FORMED

Your kindness and attention to your creation make it more than a loyal servant; you've ended up with a true friend, or even an adoptive child!

System: Spend any number of successes to create a Friendship bond at a value of your spent successes with an organism you've created.

FORGED IN LEGEND

Your work echoes great and powerful stories of myth and legend, promising more to come.

System: Spend 4 Successes to give your Item the Heroic tag, which does not count against its normal tag limit.

PUISSANCE AND POTENCY

You have forged a work that simply outclasses others of its type.

System: For every 3 successes spent, you may increase the Scale of an item for non-size purposes. Every time you do this to increase an item's Scale for any purpose, it reduces the maximum Enhancement for the item. For example, when you give a Rank 4 flying ship +1 Scale for both Speed and Durability, you reduce the maximum Enhancement you can give the ship from 5 to 3.

NEW FLAWS

These flaws are primarily designed to be used with the creation of organisms, but Storyguides or players who decide they're appropriate for a mechanism or other inorganic invention should feel free to adapt them.

DISTINCTIVE BEAST (•)

This organism is particularly noticeable, even if it's an enormous horror or unique creature. Attempts to notice its presence or track it down gain + 2 Enhancement.

UNCOOPERATIVE (• •)

The first time in a scene this organism's master wants it to act, they must succeed on a Persuasion or Survival roll to get the creature to cooperate for the rest of the scene. If they fail, the creature simply refuses to do anything its owner wants until they succeed at the roll.

INERT (• • •)

The organism lacks any self-motivation, even in the face of obvious harm or danger. It must be prompted to do anything at all, including defend itself and eat to survive, and will stop and wait listlessly once it's completed a task.

RAVENOUS (• • • •)

The organism requires an enormous amount of fodder or food every day. If it goes a day without being fed, it suffers +1 Complication on all its actions which causes it to forfeit an action from starving exhaustion if not bought off. This penalty increases by 1 for every day until it's fed; at 5, the creature falls into catatonia until food is brought to it or it dies of starvation.

UNBOUND (• • • • •)

The organism regards its creator as it would any other random individual. They have no control or sway over it, and it will likely react to attempts at coercion... poorly.

A sword is nothing without the hand to wield it, but rare is the warrior who doesn't appreciate a fine blade. Equipment from **Aegis**' milieu is presented both for characters to use, and for players to use as starting points for creating their own artifacts or Super-Science inventions.

UNIVERSAL TAGS

These tags may apply to any applicable device as appropriate.

POWERED (VARIABLE)

This invention may power its Gifts or effects directly with Inspiration. If higher than 0, each point represents an innate energy charge from ambrosia or another energy source that may be used to fuel one activation of the device. Powered inventions regain all charges at the end of the session.

WEAPON TAGS

The following are new weapon tags for **Aegis**, to be used in addition to those presented in the **Trinity Continuum Core,** pp. 123-126. All weapon tags are assumed to be general unless otherwise noted.

BACKUP (1)

Whether cunningly concealed into its structure or simply a consequence of the weapon's construction, this weapon possesses an auxiliary means of attack. The backup weapon benefits from its own damage type and 1 point of Tag, as well as the Enhancement of the primary weapon. If the primary breaks, the wielder may choose to reflexively ready the backup, but must repair the weapon to retain its Enhancement bonus after the end of the scene.

BRONZE (0)

A metal associated with belligerent nobility and warfare, the copper alloy's dominance is on the wane with the spread of iron forging. Expensive to forge due to the scarceness of tin, and prone to developing bends or warps over use, bronze weapons require care and maintenance after use in combat or they lose their Enhancement until properly repaired. However, their storied history echoes throughout the age; characters prominently displaying or wielding bronze weapons gain +1 Enhancement to rolls to intimidate, inspire respect, raise martial fervor, or make similar social actions.

DAMAGE TYPE: RAY (1)

A rare damage type, indicating an attack using unearthly energies such as pure Olympian force or Atlantean high science.

IRON (0)

More recently widely embraced as a material for warfare than bronze, iron weaponry benefits from widespread ore deposits and the lack of any need for tin or other alloying agents. However, during **Aegis'** era, iron smithing is a less developed art than bronze, and iron weapons and armor are more at the mercy of their ore's quality. On a Botched attack, iron weapons break in *addition* to any other negative effect. If a character suffers a failure with an iron weapon, they may choose to have the weapon break for an additional point of Momentum for consolation.

HEROIC (1)

This weapon resonates with a history and possibility of heroism. When wielded against a character (not a vehicle or structure) with greater Durability Scale than the wielder's Might Scale, reduce that Durability Scale by 1 against the wielder's attacks. This can never cause a target's Durability Scale to go lower than the wielder's Might Scale. Under inspection from powers such as Behold the Halo **(Trinity Continuum Core,** p. 201) or Vision of Panoptes (p. XX) they clearly interact with ambrosia.

PREPARED (VARIABLE) (1)

When prepared, this weapon benefits from one of two predetermined tags, but requires preparation to benefit from this tag again. This weapon may be prepared outside of battle or as an action during combat.

REINFORCED (1)

This weapon possesses an Injury Condition box as if it were armor. Enemies targeting it with the Sunder Stunt damage the box instead of making the weapon unusable if it's undamaged.

STEEL (1)

The secret of turning iron into battle-ready steel is not yet widespread, and only the fortunate carry blades of the material. Superior in hardness, flexibility, and reliability to less advanced iron weapons and bronze, a character armed with a steel weapon gains

+1 Enhancement against opponents wielding bronze, iron, or similarly composed melee weapons.

ARMOR TAGS

The following are new armor tags for **Aegis,** to be used in addition to the tags on p. 127 in the **Trinity Continuum Core**.

BRONZE (0)

A metal associated with belligerent nobility and warfare, bronze armor is still desirable even with the rise of iron. Expensive to forge due to the scarceness of tin, and prone to developing bends or warps over use, bronze armor requires care and maintenance after use in combat or it loses its armor bonus until properly repaired. However, its storied history echoes throughout the age; characters prominently wearing bronze armor gain +1 Enhancement to rolls to intimidate, inspire respect, raise martial fervor, or make similar social actions.

HEAVY METAL (1)

This armor's weight and heft are ideal for barreling into, over, and through one's enemies. Reduce the cost of the Knockdown/Trip and Shove Stunts by 1.

HEROIC (1)

This armor resonates with a history and possibility of heroism. When a character with greater Might Scale than the wearer's Durability Scale attacks them, reduce that Might Scale for that attack by 1. This can never cause an attacker's Might Scale to go lower than the wearer's Durability Scale. Under inspection from powers such as Behold the Halo **(Trinity Continuum Core,** p. 201) or Vision of Panoptes (p. XX) this armor clearly interacts with ambrosia.

IRON (0)

Iron armor is cheaper to forge than bronze, but considerably less refined. The Sunder Stunt costs 1 less success to damage it. When a character wearing iron armor fails at a physical roll, they may accept the armor breaking to gain an additional point of Momentum as consolation.

FORMIDABLE (1)

This armor provides protection against both Blunt and Edged attacks but is wearying with longer use. A character who doesn't take time to rest after a battle or other physical exertion while wearing it suffers 1 Complication per point of Soft or Hard armor on all physical actions, causing them to lose their next action if not bought off until they get proper rest.

VEHICLE TAGS

The following list of vehicle tags may be used in addition to relevant tags from the **Trinity Continuum Core,** pp. 127-129. Each vehicle can have the character's Wealth points worth of positive tags, and can gain more points by taking negative tags. The basic vehicle template for ground, air, and water vehicles start at Size 1, Handling +0, Speed 2, before adding tags.

ANIMAL-DRAWN (0)

This vehicle is pulled or otherwise powered by an animal. If the animal is slain the vehicle is rendered nonfunctional. A poorly rested animal (such as one that's just endured battle speeds and been unable to rest) imposes a cumulative point of Complication on all the vessel's maneuvers for each scene or hour of operation before it can rest. If not bought off, the vehicle loses a point of Speed Scale, becoming unable to operate once its Speed Scale has reached 0 and the animal powering it collapses from exhaustion.

BATTLE PLATFORM (1)

This vehicle rules over the battlefield, placing its wielders beyond the reach of the common warrior. Gain +1 Enhancement for attacks against unmounted characters. Increase your defense by +1 against Close Combat attacks from unmounted characters without the Reach tag.

BATTERING RAM (1)

Dedicated battering rams make direct kinetic attacks with one's vehicle more effective and at least theoretically safer. Ramming attacks and similar maneuvers gain +1 Enhancement and access to the following stunt:

Clean Hit (1): Your vehicle suffers 1 less damage on a successful Ram attack. This may be bought multiple times.

FULLY CREWED (1)

This vehicle gains +1 Size. This large vehicle requires a large crew to operate — at least 10 people for each point of Size, and includes space for twice as many. It can still operate if it's missing up to half its crew, but then loses all handling bonuses or doubles all handling penalties.

MUSCLE-POWERED (0)

This vehicle is propelled and controlled by the exertions of its crew. Resistant to the fickle movements of the wind, muscle-powered vessels must instead concern themselves with their crew's exhaustion. A poorly rested crew (such as one that's just endured battle speeds and been unable to catch their breath) imposes a cumulative point of Complication on all the vessel's maneuvers for each scene or hour of operation before they can rest. If not bought off, the vessel loses a point of Speed Scale, becoming unable to operate once its Speed Scale has reached 0.

MUSCLE-AND-SAIL (1)

This vessel benefits both from fully rigged sails and sufficient oar or beast positions to propel itself. In any given scene its commanders may choose which propulsion method they use, though lasting penalties from over-exerting its living engines don't fully clear until proper rest is achieved.

WIND-POWERED (0)

Powered by wind, this vehicle doesn't require a major investment in human or animal exertion, but is subject to the weather's whim. If winds are unfavorable the vehicle suffers –2 handling; if the winds are completely dead, the vehicle's Speed Scale is reduced to 0.

WEAPONS

These weapons are common, notable, or both during **Aegis'** time period. Players and Storyguides shouldn't hesitate to use the Tag system to make variations or custom weapons, whether it be a bronze spear of note or a quiver full of trick arrows.

ASPIS (SHIELD)

Enhancement: 1

Damage Type: Blunt

Tags: Reinforced, Shield

Notes: A stout shield makes it all the easier to be brave in battle, and the aspis is one of the stoutest. Constructed from layers of leather, wood, and bronze, the aspis is on the forefront of shield technology, its combination of central strap and edge handle preventing it from being knocked aside or away when struck.

DORU (SPEAR)

Enhancement: 1

Damage Type: Edged

Tags: Backup (Edged, Grapple), Iron, Melee, Reach

Notes: Storied weapon of conqueror and defender alike, the doru will be at the forefront of infantry battles for centuries to come. Fitted with a "lizard-killer" spike on its butt for use in case its leaf-shaped iron blade fails or its ashwood shaft breaks, the doru is the reliable friend of the common infantry soldier and mighty hero alike.

JAVELIN

Enhancement: 1

Damage Type: Edged

Tags: Iron, Prepared (Brutal or Piercing), Ranged (Short), Thrown

Notes: The javelin is a light spear popular with skirmishers and hunters, hurled against its targets at a distance. A leather throwing-strap or amentum allows skilled users to impart additional force and accuracy when fully prepared, adjusting the wrap of the leather and spin of the javelin to suit their needs.

REVERED BRONZE BLADE

Enhancement: 2

Damage Type: Edged

Tags: Bronze, Heroic, Melee, Quality (2),

Notes: From great rounded cleavers of men to more nimble single edged blades, no small armory of bronze blades of repute has passed down into the hands of **Aegis'** heroes. Even if reforged or remade repeatedly, these swords carry with them stories of heroic pasts, and promise equally heroic futures to their wielders.

SLING

Enhancement: 1

Damage Type: Blunt

Tags: Ranged (Medium), Variable Ammo 2

Notes: The humble weapon of shepherds and scouts is also a terror on the battlefield. Slings hurl stone, clay, or lead bullets from a small pouch, capable of reaching their targets at impressive ranges. A well-placed stone can leave a man senseless or brained; a lead bullet at the right angle can wound through even well-made armor; and heated clay balls can set flammable objects, structures, or people aflame.

ARMOR

Armor is expensive; warriors often wear suits passed down between parent and child for generations, as long as the pieces can be repaired. While fitted and designed to be as unencumbering as possible, it nevertheless is uncomfortable in extremes of weather, exertion, or long use. Most people won't wear it unless they're heading to war or a sure fight, instead relying on a carried shield in a pinch.

FORTRESS PANOPLY

Base: Formidable (Impact Resistant, Slash Resistant)

Tags: Bronze, Formidable, Heavy Metal, Soft 2, Hard 3

Notes: Exhausting to wear for any length of time, incredibly expensive in bronze and skilled labor to create, Fortress Panoply is among the strongest armor forged by mortal hands in the age. Suitable for great battles and sieges, most suits sit in places of honor in their owner's halls until needed for war. The Loaded Edge, similar Wealth, or the Artifact Edge are usually required for a character to possess a set.

HEROIC CUIRASS

Base: Formidable (Impact Resistant, Slash Resistant)

Tags: Bronze, Formidable, Heroic, Soft 1, Hard 1

Notes: Shaped to closely match the human form, a bronze breastplate can deflect many attacks while not being as exhausting as a full set of panoply. Some sets are adorned with intricate musculature or ornamental engravings, while others are worn with personal accoutrement to accentuate one's stature, achievements, or bravery, and others just bear the marks of battles survived and repairs endured. Yet when worn by brave heroes against dire threats, such breastplates seem to fare remarkably well.

LINOTHORAX

Base: Slash Resistant

Tags: Soft 2

Notes: Layers of tough linen fabric prove a cost effective and fantastic armor against edged weapons and arrows, making it an increasingly popular choice for warriors and armies. Even better that it's less fatiguing to wear than bronze or iron. However, it's noticeably less protective against concussive attacks, and far less impressive to boot.

PANOPLY

Base: Formidable (Impact Resistant, Slash Resistant)

Tags: Bronze, Formidable, Soft 2, Hard 1,

Notes: Full bodied bronze armor, panoply protects an enormous amount of the warrior, at both considerable cost in treasure and sweat.

RING AND CHAIN SHIRT

Base: Slash Resistant

Tags: Iron, Soft 2, Hard 1

Notes: A strange armor brought from far shores, chain or ring armor is made of many interlocking rings, providing excellent protection against spear and knife.

VEHICLES

Mundane vehicles in the period of **Aegis** are powered by muscle or wind. Even as many-oared boats ply the Aegean and would-be warlords survey the battlefield in chariots, however, stranger things may occasionally be seen in flashes of light on the horizon or overhead.

Naval combat in Aegis often sees ships resorting to ramming to sink or at least damage other vessels. Ramming uses the following stunt:

Ram (variable): Spend successes equal to the higher of your target's Size and Speed. You put the full weight and power of your vehicle into their vehicle for catastrophic results. They suffer the higher of your vehicle's Size or Speed in Injury Conditions. Your vehicle suffers their vehicle's Size in Injury conditions. Neither you nor your target benefit from Speed Scale next round. You cannot Ram if your Speed Scale is 0.

PENTEKONTOR

Size: 3

Handling: −1

Speed: 2

Tags: Cargo 1, Fully Crewed, Massive 1, Muscle-And-Sail, Sluggish 1, Watercraft

Cost: 3

Notes: Name after the fifty rowers who man its exemplars, a pentekontor encompasses a great variety of many-oared galleys upon the sea, with crews from half to double that size. Equipped with sails for use in favorable winds and plenty of oars for uncooperative weather, the pentekontor, its variations and improvements are ubiquitous across mercantile and

military endeavors across the Aegean and beyond. Military ships are often armed with Weaponry 1 (Naval Archers) or the Battering Ram tag.

CHARIOT

Size: 2

Handling: +0

Speed: 2

Tags: Cargo (additional rider) 1, Animal Powered, Battle Platform, Massive 1, Wheeled

Cost: 3

Notes: Symbols of power and authority, chariots are wheeled conveyance pulled (usually) by horses, allowing their driver or a co-rider incredible mobility over the battlefield, and offering a stable platform from which to make attacks.

SUPER-SCIENCE ARTIFACTS

Treasures of all sorts fill the world of Aegis. Clever mechanisms and peerless objects are made at the hands of master crafters. Mysterious works of near-supernatural genius and philosophy, more energy and idea than solid matter, are made by witch, demigod, or even abstruse philosopher. And even stranger items exist, items defying classification, dating back to the great day of fire that brought ambrosia and so much more to the world.

All of these are appropriate for characters to create or discover with super-science. Where additional Flaws are necessary for a device to be obtainable through the Artifact or Armory Edges, suggestions are indicated. Storyguides and players should feel free to alter Flaws or specific abilities to better fit their stories, character backgrounds, or general interest.

ATLANTEAN DREAMSTONES

Rank: 3

Enhancement: 1

Gifts: Oneiromancy

Tags: Powered 1

Perfectly polished cabochons of orichalcum, the Dreamstones float in a shallow dish of precious ambrosia, carefully diluted with wine and vinegar regularly. The Dreamstones provide lenses to look into the minds of sleepers, their power catalyzed and amplified by their rarefied bath. Their owner has but to touch the Dreamstones and envision a target in their mind's eye to exert the powers of the Oneiromancy Gift upon them, paying 1 Inspiration or using the Dreamstone's innate powered quality in place of the regular requirements. The device adds its Enhancement to the user's attempts to influence or invade another's dreams. Outside of Atlantean hands and away from regular maintenance, the forces that emanate from the stones can make their housing fluid dangerously combustible; add the Self Destructive (•••) Flaw to take the Dreamstones as an Artifact.

EVER-LOYAL HOUND

Rank: 2

Flaws: Loyal to a Fault (•), Password Protected (•)

Any farmer may raise dogs to hunt rats and protect his doorstep, but it takes skill and practice to raise an animal of a higher caliber. To create more reliable canine servants, practiced kennel keepers select only the strongest and keenest pups, raising them through constant training in a rigorous methodology. The results are powerful hunters and guards, loyal and obedient to a fault. This beast would sooner die than allow their masters to come to harm. However, this deep-seated loyalty also leaves them waiting for their masters' every command. While a more common animal might spring into action to chase down a rabbit as it runs past, the Ever-Loyal Hound waits patiently for its master's word, which can be frustrating if that master fancied rabbit for dinner.

Primary Pool: 7 Attack!, Senses (+1 Enhancement)
Secondary Pool: 5 Complex Instructions, Intimidation
Desperation Pool: 3
Defense: 3
Health: 4
Initiative: 3
Edges: Natural Weapons (Mighty jaws and teeth), Keen Sense (Hearing), Keen Sense (Smell)

FISHSCALE THORAX

Rank: 3

Gifts: Dolphin-Swift Strokes, Hydra's Regeneration

Tags: Composite (Impact Resistant, Slash Resistant), Soft 1

Flaws: Loyal to a Fault •, Weakness (Fire) ••

Raided too long by Myceneans foraging for supplies on the way to war, the people of a small outlying island armored the greatest of their warriors

to oppose the warlike Greeks. Calling upon dire stories of avenging rage rising up from the depths and an ancient and strange kinship between human and sea creature, they imbued a breastplate of scales with great powers. Trembling and almost alive to the touch, when worn its wearer becomes like a creature of the sea, untroubled by water and healing as a sea star sliced apart. However, such armors shrink from the danger of killing flame, and seem to have strong opinions as to their owners, refusing to function for any who try to steal or borrow the garment.

GOLDEN THINKER

Rank: 5

Flaws: Distinctive Beast (•), Ravenous (••••)

Enormous amounts of ambrosia, strange substances found from fallen stars, and a willingness to try the impossible are required to create a Thinker: rock and ambrosia imbued with life and genius, transformed from lifeless matter to living, thinking flesh. Their form also mimics that of humankind, though gleaming like polished golden and bronze. The true miracle is that their minds and spirit possess all the fruit of human knowledge and feeling, grasping the nature of the world instinctively and capable of reaching beyond the mundane in pursuit of transcendent truths. Such glorious creations are not without their flaws, however; without a steady supply of ambrosia and certain minerals, a Thinker will soon lapse into catatonia until revived by those marvelous substances. And while theoretically capable of searching out the required materials on their own, most prefer to spend all their efforts on pondering and discussing matters they think more important, such as philosophical conundrums, the nature of the greater universe, or why a passerby is sad.

Primary Pool: 10 (Philosophy [+2 Enhancement] and Science [+2 Enhancement])
Secondary Pool: 8 (Physical Exertion and Senses [+2 Enhancement])
Desperation Pool: 6
Defense: 5
Health: 8
Initiative: 5
Edges: Broad Knowledge • , Lightning Calculator • • , Polyglot •
Source: 6
Powers: Inspired, Hyper Intelligent
Gifts: Atemporal Knowledge, Pathos, Scent of Gold, Split Paths

MAGNIFICENT STEED

Rank: 3

Flaws: Loyal to a Fault •

Whether raised by hand from their first tremulous steps as a foal or captured and tamed as a young stallion or mare, certain horses seemed destined to carry heroes. A good eye for horseflesh and more than a little familiarity with their rearing and care can turn a worthy beast into a superlative companion. Their possessors rarely trade away such creatures, but occasionally give them as gifts of surpassing value. When treated kindly and well, such horses often become more like family than mounts, and many is the rider who has bitterly mourned the passing of a beloved steed. To take a newly tamed Magnificent Steed as an Artifact, add the Uncooperative (••) flaw. Built as a Follower, a Magnificent Steed may learn and grow alongside its rider (p. XX), and may remove the Uncooperative flaw for 6 XP.

Skills: Athletics 4, Survival 1
Enhancements: Fearless +1, Like the Wind +2
Approaches: Force 4, Finesse 1, Resilience 2
Paths: Finest Equine, Loyal to the Last
Health: 3
Initiative: 2
Defense: Dodge 5
Edges: Danger Sense, Direction Sense, Extraordinary Speed (Speed Scale 2), Iron Will

OVERLORD'S GAUNTLET

Rank: 3

Enhancement: 3

Tags: Damage Type: Ray, Ranged (Short), Variable 2 (Spreading, Stunning), Worn 1

Favored by high ranking Atlanteans, these ornate bronze gauntlets studded with gleaming stones focus obscure energies into devastating beams of power. Able to stun and disable as easily as they can kill, the energies the gauntlets emit pass through most armor as easily as wind through grass. Prestigious weapons fashioned for the elite, their charge seems nearly indefinite... though individual gauntlets kept far away from Atlantean maintenance and calibration are known to malfunction. To take a Gauntlet as an Artifact, add the Unreliable (•••) Flaw.

PET CHIMERA

Rank: 4

Flaws: Distinctive Beast •, Unreliable •••

Upon seeing the horrors unleashed upon the world

by misapplication of ambrosia and unnatural arts, it's perhaps inevitable that some would desire that power for themselves. And so, in the wake of creatures such as the original chimera created by Echidna, the brilliant but foolhardy bent the wonders of the world to their own ends, creating dreadful, unspeakable things in the service of merciless rulers or their own awful designs. It's unclear, then, why one made a beast of eel, fox, and flamingo, and whether they intended to instill it with a playful, teasing demeanor. But such a thing is now loose in the world, scaring sheep and shepherds as it flies overhead, breaking doors to see what's inside particularly interesting looking buildings, and dragging away objects that attract its attention. The thing is friendly; those who feed it some organ meats or fish quickly gain its allegiance. However, it's clear why its creators abandoned it; while it will attempt to follow orders, much of the time its heads find themselves distracted and abandon whatever errand its erstwhile masters have dispatched it on.

Primary Pool: 9 Many-Headed Curiosity (+2 Enhancement), Playful Destruction
Secondary Pool: 7 Endurance (+1 Enhancement), Mobility (+1 Enhancement)
Desperation Pool: 5 Staying Focused
Defense: 4
Health: 6
Initiative: 4
Edges: 7
Source: 5
Powers: Flight, Multi-Limbed

SONGBIRD CHORUS

Rank: 3

Size: 2

Handling: +0

Speed: 2

Gifts: Maze of Bronze and Iron, Whisperer (**Trinity Core** p. 220)

Tags: Cargo (additional rider) 1, Animal Powered (Songbirds), Battle Platform, Flight System, Massive 1

Flaws: Jinxed •••

A wheel less wicker chariot covered in loops of leather and bronze, the strange conveyance seems impossible to move. However, its owner has only to stand in its basket and whistle (and spend Momentum) for ambrosia-fed songbirds to flit to their posts and carry the conveyance into the air. Raised and trained by Solon the Elder to prove his mastery over the animal world, their song calms wild beasts and fearful creatures alike. Even moreso than earthbound chariots, the Songbird is a terrifying vehicle to face in war; not even the skies are free from strife!

THE PERFECT ROCK

Rank: 1

Enhancement: 2

Tags: Brutal, Piercing

Flaws: Limited Resources ••

Idle shepherds, curious girls on rocky beaches, and particularly determined dogs sometimes find them: rocks shaped by unimaginable forces across the ages to become utterly terrifying projectiles in the hands of an eager youth with a sling. Many are used but once to hunt lunch. The wise retrieve them for later use when possible, often after their impact ends a conflict.

VIPER'S MILK

Rank: 4

Enhancement: 3

Gifts: Apollo's Mercy

Tags: Powered 2

Flaws: Built in Complication 4

Ambrosia is not primarily a curative, but its miraculous powers can be turned to that end. It's unknown what healer or philosopher first combined viper's venom with the golden miracle, but it's become a powerful drug in learned hands. A skilled healer can drive disease from a person's bowels, corruption from their wounds, and lead them to recovery from long ailments, though the process is often accompanied by unpleasant sweats, chills, and strange ambrosia-driven apparitions. A physician gains the Milk's Enhancement for any rolls to treat injuries or disease with it, while those who benefit from it also gain that Enhancement to any required rolls to recover. What's more, sealed amphorae of the mix never seem to run out, but sometimes golden ambrosia denatures the vital venom in the mix. If its Complication isn't bought off, the Milk is useless until viper's venom is carefully mixed back in.

CHAPTER SIX

GIFTS

"You must forge your own path for it to mean anything."
— Rick Riordan, The Lost Hero

Transformed by ambrosia, the Inspired of the **Trinity Continuum: Aegis** era display powers that far surpass those of any baseline human. Whether they consider themselves blessed by the gods or believe their dedication and training have granted them superior abilities, they use their unique abilities to explore, to learn, to protect the people and communities they love, and to vanquish monsters. Priests, philosophers, scholars, scientists, and physicians all have their theories as to the powers' source, but no matter their origin, ambrosia's effect on the age is undeniable.

AMBROSIA'S REWARDS

"Gifts" is the collective term for the wide range of supernatural abilities those who have been in contact with ambrosia exhibit. Some Gifts are active abilities that the character invokes (Momentary Gifts), while others are always-on effects (Constant Gifts.) Some require spending Inspiration or other actions to activate, while some may be activated reflexively by an Inspired hero.

In **Aegis,** all Gifts stem from the consumption of ambrosia, but witnesses invent many different explanations for where the powers come from. While the abilities Gifts grant differ between Champions, Oracles, and Olympians, all fate-touched heroes are able to affect people, substances, elements, and probability in a manner most mortals believe reserved for the gods and those worthy of their blessings. Here are the ways the different character types' Gifts manifest:

- Champions are the classical Greek heroes of the setting. They get by on their wit, quick thinking, preparedness, and charm. Champions' powers appear far less dramatic and flashy than those of their Oracle or Olympian counterparts. Most can be chalked up to luck, superior skill, careful planning, or elite training. Champions make take any luck- or aptitude-based Gifts whose prerequisites they meet that do not possess the Oracle or Olympian keywords. They may also take Gifts from the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**.

- Many of an Oracle's Gifts are disguised as ritual, prior knowledge, stunning foresight, or invocations of Chthonic entities from beyond this mortal coil. Oracles command the world to act according to their demands. The dead rise at their call, storms roll in when they beckon, and even the gates of Hades open for them if they make the proper obeisance. Some Oracle Gifts require a degree of sacrifice, whether from the Oracle herself, or the person on whose behalf she's acting. Power often comes at a cost, and Oracles understand the required give and take. Oracles can't take Gifts with the Champion or Olympian keywords.

- Olympians are power made manifest. They do not rely on subtle manipulations of fate like Champions, nor do they call power forth from other sources like Oracles. If an Olympian wants a storm, they throw lightning from their arm. If they want a castle wall to fall, they needn't rely on trickery or cunning to make it open; they knock it down themselves. Rather than transforming the world around them, they are themselves transformed. Olympians can't take Gifts with the Champion or Oracle keywords.

NEW KEYWORDS

In addition to the Constant, Momentary, Luck, Attribute (type), and Skill (type) keywords introduced in the **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook**, the following keywords are used for Gifts in **Aegis:**

Ambrosia: Gifts with the Ambrosia keyword require a source of ambrosia, such as a pool or a jar of it that a character previously collected from one.

Champion: Gifts with the Champion keyword represent the Champion's physical prowess, exceptional intelligence, and deft social skills. Only Champion characters may use these Gifts.

Creation: Gifts with the Creation keyword require the Oracle to create a simple food or drink, or perhaps a liquid to boil to produce steam. In all cases, the substance the Oracle creates is an

Clash

When two characters use abilities (such as Gifts) that come into conflict, such as both acting against the same target or canceling each other out, they Clash. In the event of the Clash, each player rolls their character's Skill + Inspiration rating (or most appropriate antagonist pool + Source). Should this roll tie, always favor players' characters over Storyguide characters, and always favor the defender. In the case of two characters acting against the same target, the defender is whomever used their power first. If that is somehow simultaneous, then both fail on a tie.

essential part of using this Gift. All Creation Gifts require at least a minute or two to use, since creating the food, drink, or scented liquid is part of doing so.

Olympian: Gifts with the Olympian keyword represent the Olympian's innate ability to wreak changes on their environment or their own body. Only Olympian characters may use these Gifts.

Oracle: Gifts with the Oracle keyword represent powers of divination, weather manipulation, and transformation. Only Oracle characters may use these Gifts.

Transformation: Gifts with the Transformation keyword make temporary or permanent alterations in the Olympian's body and often make them appear visibly nonhuman.

Universal: Universal Gifts may be purchased by any character type. They represent either advanced training that any Inspired individual can receive or common powers unlocked by exposure to ambrosia. Some Universal Gifts have **Variations** that reflect how they manifest for different types of Inspired characters.

Adapting Gifts

In addition to the Gifts listed in this chapter, players may wish to draw upon Gifts and abilities from other Trinity titles when they create their characters. Storyguides and players should discuss how those powers manifest in an ancient world setting. While their mechanical effects may be the same, their narrative descriptions should fit the theme and genre of the game.

Universal Gifts

Any character type may use the following Gifts.

Luck Gifts

The following Gifts are luck-based.

Choral Knowledge

Keywords: Constant, Luck, Universal

Voices follow the Inspired wherever they may go, singing of their accomplishments and warning of future failures.

System: Once per session, your character may take a few minutes to contemplate their existence and a possible course of action. Roll Cunning + Enigmas, Difficulty 2. On a success, the Storyguide provides a brief sentence of cryptic warning about something that may or may not happen in the character's immediate future. The Storyguide should note that this Gift was invoked successfully. When or if the scene they mentioned occurs, award the players a point of Momentum and let the characters know that this is the moment of which they were forewarned. Whether or not they understand or trust the warning is up to them. Heroes who successfully thwart fate or bring about a desired outcome regain a point of Inspiration.

Crucible of Calamity

Keywords: Momentary, Luck, Universal

Great heroes are challenged by even greater woe, some dogged by the consequences of their own hubris, others tested without end by the whims of capricious gods, and yet others struggle with their own abilities outstripping their mortal forms.

System: Once per session when your character fails a roll or makes an obvious error, you may choose to turn it into a botch. Any character may find themselves run afoul of their past misdeeds or the universe's caprice, while Champions may find fate and chance targeting them with implausibly personal insults, Oracles find their

worst hunches and visions come to life, and Olympians find their powers spreading beyond their control.

Rather than regular Consolation, the character regains a point of Inspiration and a bigger boon when they overturn or contend with this hardship. For example, finding a breakthrough or resource that immediately allows them to complete a crafting milestone; a discovery that reveals information as if via a successful procedural information gathering roll; a personal connection that allows access to a Path's resources for the rest of the session, or similar boons are all possible.

CUTTING THROUGH THE KNOT

Keywords: Momentary, Luck, Universal

Complex problems are often best solved with complex solutions. However, "best" is relative. Sometimes speed trumps effectiveness.

Systems: Once per session, when confronted with a puzzle, lock, trap, or riddle, the player may spend Inspiration to invoke this Gift and narrate how their character destroys the Obstacle in front of them. However, fate does not reward those who subvert its challenges kindly. The Difficulty required to overcome that Obstacle becomes a Complication that the Storyguide may inflict on the character at any time, up to a maximum of 3. Failing to buy off the Complication stuns the character for a round.

FROM MY TRAVELS

Keywords: Constant, Luck, Universal

Having traveled long and far from home, the adventurer has a collection of oddities, trinkets, and souvenirs rumbling around their pack.

System: When purchased, the player may choose three of the following items their character can call upon. Invoking an item can be done reflexively but costs a point of Inspiration. The player should describe how the character came to be in possession of the artifact. For particularly thrilling descriptions the Storyguide may wish to reward the party with a Momentum.

At the end of the scene, the item is rendered inoperable until the character spends another Inspiration to remember she picked up a second or was able to repair the first one. A player may select this Gift multiple times to unlock three new options. A character can only use a specific object once per session.

- **Blade from the Elysian Fields:** This simple white piece of grass is said to be from the Elysian Fields. When wrapped around the hilt of a blade, it causes the wielder to be able to purchase the Stunt Inflict Injury up to three times against any kind of undead. It also allows them to strike incorporeal beings.
- **Cord of Damocles:** This fine black cord has a nefarious aura about it. The Champion must ready an action to break it just as another character takes action. This allows her player to use Complicate Action against any target using their Enigmas + Manipulation. This Complication can take the form of a bird cawing, a board cracking, or anything else throwing the target off their proverbial game.
- **Feather from a Distant Land:** This feather is heavier than it has any right to be but floats quite slowly when released from the hand. If someone speaks a falsehood in its presence, it slams into the ground as though it were a stone.
- **Petrified Vines:** Vines said to have grown in the cave of a Gorgon. When wrapped around the wrists of a victim, they tighten. Breaking free of them requires five successes on an Athletics + Might roll. They can only be applied to the willing or the unconscious. Alternatively, the vine can be used as a nearly unbreakable rope.
- **Pomegranate Seed**: When placed into the chest of one with mortal Injury, the pomegranate seed sprouts and holds off their death. They will still die without medical attention eventually, but they will be stable for a number of days equal to the character's Inspiration.
- **Scraps of Promethean Liver:** This vial full of brownish-black liquid explodes once its container is sundered. It burns with a flame that seems nearly impossible to quench. Even water makes it burn faster. The bottle can be thrown. It creates a damage 3 environmental effect with the Continuous Tag. Targets need three successes on an Athletics + Dexterity roll to put themselves out.
- **Skeleton Key:** This thin piece of metal is said to be a shard of Hades' skeleton key. When picking a lock, the key grants the wielder a +2 Enhancement.
- **String from the Orpheus' Lyre**: This simple string hums gently; by plucking it, the Inspired creates a wave of gentle white noise that blocks

any other sound, so long as she never turns around.

- **Waters of Lethe:** A small vial of water said to be from the river of souls. Splashing this water in someone's face makes them forget the last hour of their life.

ON THE HEAD OF A PIN

Keywords: Constant, Luck, Universal

The hero always lands on their feet through incredible luck or god-gifted balance.

System: The character cannot be knocked prone. She takes no damage from falls that wouldn't kill her outright.

PATROCLUS TO ACHILLES

Keywords: Constant, Luck, Universal

Allies are fleeting, but some Greek heroes are lucky enough to encounter a true friend, someone to stand by their side in times of trouble and share their bed in times of pleasure.

System: When a player takes this Gift, they should design a Storyguide Character with the help of the Storyguide. This SGC doesn't need a sheet but needs to be designed dramatically. The SGC becomes a part of the character like a sidekick. Once per session the character can call on their ally to reduce the cost of a Dramatic Edit by one. Their ally, friend, and confidant knows them so well that they anticipate the character's needs.

SACRED ANIMAL

Keywords: Constant, Luck, Universal

The Inspired imbues an animal companion with the power granted by their ambrosia, linking their fates.

System: The character possesses a special link with an animal companion imbued with ambrosia. Use the characteristics provided below to represent all companions. Typical animal companions include dogs, cats, snakes, birds, deer, or panthers.

Variations: The Inspired may gain access to unusual companions.

ANIMAL COMPANION

These characteristics represent a wide variety of animals suffused with ambrosia. Even diminutive animals demonstrate these traits, possessing traits far beyond what are typical of their species.

Primary Pool: 7 (Two of Combat, Senses, Survival or Tracking)

Secondary Pool: 5 (One of Combat, Senses, or Tracking)

Desperation Pool: 3

Enhancement: 0

Defense: 3

Health: 4

Initiative: 3

Source: 3

Anomaly Powers: Natural Weapons, Hardened Skin, Heightened Reflexes (or Flight, if flying)

Automaton Companion (Oracle): The Oracle possesses an automaton companion, a machine created from wood, metal, and other materials that resembles an animal and is powered by ambrosia. The companion gains the Unliving Anomaly Power.

Monster of Ambrosia (Olympian): The Olympian's animal companion is suffused with her mighty ambrosia, appearing more like a monster than an animal. The companion gains the Enormous Size Anomaly Power.

VAULT OF HEAVEN

Keywords: Constant, Luck, Universal

With an invocation of the gods, the hero may access an impossible treasure vault, a starry portal from which she may call forth her panoply.

System: So long as her hands and mouth aren't bound, the character may speak a command to reflexively open a hand-sized portal to her divine vault, a storage space where she can store her equipment. As a simple action, she can deposit handheld or worn items into the vault or withdraw them from it by hand. The divine vault can hold no more than a small room's worth of equipment.

As a safety measure, it is not possible to store living creatures within a divine vault.

Variations: The Inspired may specialize in the use of their divine vault.

A Seer's Implements (Oracle): The Oracle may always find the reagents necessary to use her Gifts stored in her divine vault. This Gift cannot provide ambrosia.

Restricted Access (Olympian): The Olympian has access to an enlarged divine vault containing equipment or spare parts. Their divine vault has enough storage space to fill it with a palace's worth of items. Once per story, they may spend an Inspiration to draw forth a piece of equipment necessary to repair an item for a Super-science project.

VISION OF PANOPTES

Keywords: Constant, Luck, Universal

Ambrosia flows through the veins of those it touches as the dolphin flows through the ocean. By focusing on the current of another being, one can notice the subtle vibrations of its passing.

GATHERING REAGENTS

Many Gifts in **Aegis** make use of reagents, ingredients necessary for the Inspired to use some of their Gifts, but how are these acquired? The primary method of determining this is access from a character's Paths. For the most common reagents, the Storyguide may simply decide a character has access to them, unless the character is in a situation where it wouldn't be possible, for example if she were captured and had her pack taken from her. For uncommon reagents, a character may have to leverage an appropriate Path's access connections, such as an Oracle using the Emporoi Path to gain access to rare poisons or ingredients.

Finally, if a character has no other means of acquiring what's needed, she may spend a point of Inspiration for a Dramatic Edit to indicate she'd acquired the uncommon reagents she needed. Ambrosia and items recovered from the sky chariot's crash are the rarest and mightiest reagents; these must be acquired through Gifts or narrative events.

System: By focusing for a turn, a hero can confirm whether ambrosia has touched another person, animal, or device.

Variations: Depending on the nature of their Inspiration, heroes perceive ambrosia in different ways. When Champions focus, they notice the ripples of energy moving through the body and pooling in certain places. Oracles hear the whispers of fate when they are near Inspired individuals, allowing them to use this power in response to hearing another's voice. Olympian eyes glow as they activate this Gift making it obvious; however, they automatically learn what type of Inspiration a character has if applicable.

APTITUDE GIFTS

Any character type may use the following Aptitude Gifts.

INTELLECT

BELOVED BY THE GODS

Keywords: Constant, Attribute (Intellect, Cunning), Universal

The hero has acquired an ethereal companion, a daimon to aid them.

System: The Inspired character possesses a daimon, an otherworldly companion that serves as an assistant. Communicating through the ambrosia that suffuses the hero, this assistant may speak directly into his mind, or appear as a holographic vision only visible to him. The daimon is capable of offering assistance in administration, mathematics, language translation, and psychology. The daimon may answer factual questions, rolling 4 dice to perform mental actions, or providing +2 Enhancement to procedural or Influence actions that would benefit from their assistance.

The daimon often takes the form of a deceased loved one, a mentor, or a divinity whose wisdom the character seeks.

LANGUAGE OF AUTOMATA

Keywords: Attribute (Intellect), Momentary, Universal

Prerequisites: Technology •

By accident or careful study, the hero has learned the secrets of automata.

System: The character is capable of intuiting the behaviors and communications of automata created by Super-Science, even if they communicate in binary, non-verbally, or through some other kind of transmission. By spending an Inspiration, they may guess a command code capable of allowing them to influence even a mindless automaton, which gains an Attitude of +1 toward them.

RETAINING THE GIFT

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Intellect), Universal

Medusa's head retained its ability to petrify all who met her gaze, even after Perseus struck it from her shoulders.

System: Your character possesses the ability to allow a piece she took from a monster to retain one of its special abilities. To use this Gift, your character must kill a monster that has at least one Gift or special power that she has observed it using. In the scene immediately after killing the creature, your character must spend a point of Inspiration and carve off a part of the monster's body. The special power must work thematically with the item. For instance, the Nemean Lion's hide could retain its toughness and your character could wear it as armor, but using its tail in that way wouldn't make sense. Likewise, the Medusa's head should retain the ability to petrify people, but her hand would not. Preparing the portion of the monster requires one full scene. An item preserved in this way doesn't rot and retains both its flexibility and its Gift indefinitely.

SOCIETY SAVANT

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Intelligence), Universal

Prerequisites: Intelligence ••••

Even now, the number of Colleges, secret societies, and shadow organizations threaten to dominate the world. It would be remiss if the hero did not at least understand the basic organization and structure of the various societies that are nearest her. She can identify the signs, the hidden code, and the drop sites of the local secret organizations in her domain.

System: When presented with a sign or coded letter, after a mere moment of inspection, the character can determine the society or College to which it belongs.

By spending a point of Inspiration, the character gains an Enhancement equal to the Attribute rating in order to decipher any hidden or coded message, recognize secret handshakes, or identify important jargon used within her vicinity.

An additional point of Inspiration spent grants her

the ability to mimic what she has seen and to use the Enhancement to convince members of the society that she belongs among them and is a member.

CUNNING

BELOVED BY THE GODS (P. XX)

GUIDANCE OF ASTRON

Keywords: Constant, Attribute (Cunning), Universal

Prerequisites: Cunning •••

The stars provide guidance for nautical travelers worldwide but few can match her expertise when it comes to navigation using these celestial bodies. She can never be lost while the guiding light shines above her.

System: Your character is at home under the night sky and her sense of direction is unfailing so long as there is even one star in the sky to navigate by. She can always tell which way is North, how far the ocean is, and gains Enhancement equal to her Cunning rating in order to navigate through the wilderness when under the night sky.

VISION OF ARGUS

Keywords: Constant, Attribute (Cunning), Universal

Prerequisites: Cunning •••

While the actual number of your character's eyes remains unchanged, she possesses an almost preternatural sense of her surroundings.

System: While your character can only pay attention to one event or interaction in one direction at a time, she always has a general awareness of everything going on around her, making it impossible for anyone to sneak up on your character or attack her from behind, and allowing your character to instantly know who or what is on all sides of her. If someone is sneaking up on your character and they aren't concealed with a Gift or even sufficiently dim light, then she notices them as easily as if the person were standing directly in front of her.

MIGHT

FANTASTIC FORM

Keywords: Constant, Attribute (Might, Dexterity, Stamina, or Presence), Universal

For some heroes, inner thoughts and latent nature resonates strongly with the touch of ambrosia, causing startling changes that leave them permanently changed by its mark.

System: Ambrosia has transformed your character beyond its usual effect, obviously altering the body, though they remain in full control of their faculties and abilities. A woman reborn in the image of the stories of oak tree dryads might possess inhuman beauty touched by the colors of tree and living vegetation, while a man raised on stories of foreign antler deities might sprout an impressive rack from his head. While attempts to identify your character become drastically easier for their enemies, they also gain +2 Enhancement on rolls that would directly benefit from their change. The player and Storyguide should discuss what's appropriate when this Gift is taken.

At Inspiration 5, a repurchase allows a character to change whenever they have access to enough ambrosia to bathe in, changing their form's feature and corresponding bonuses.

LIKE HERMES

Keywords: Constant, Attribute (Might), Universal

Prerequisites: Might •••

Moving with the force of a rushing river and the swiftness of the wind, divine flesh is not limited to the paltry pace of mortality.

System: Your character benefits from +1 Speed Scale when able to move unimpeded. If environmental conditions would prevent your character from moving across them quickly (such as a field of ruins and broken land, a city street packed with people, or the sea tossed by a storm) you may spend 1 Inspiration to ignore that limitation for the scene.

PRESENCE

EXHORTATION TO VICTORY

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Presence), Universal

With him in command, the odds of victory are notably higher.

System: Before a battle of any sort, your character can give a rousing speech that increases the odds of victory for your side. As long as he knows all of his fellow soldiers' names, speaks the same language, and has spent at least an hour or two in their company, he can spend a point of Inspiration to can give a number of soldiers or other people preparing for battle equal to five times his total Intuitive Facet +1

Enhancement to all of their combat rolls, and +1 to their Defense for the duration of the coming combat.

TAMING BEASTS & MONSTERS

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Presence), Universal

Prerequisites: Presence ••

Even the fiercest wild beast or the most terrible monster cannot resist her.

System: Your character approaches a beast or monster that is not currently in combat, and that no one is currently threatening. This creature also cannot currently be in a trap, or otherwise harmed or restrained. Your character must offer the beast food, and speak softly and soothingly to the creature. Make a Persuasion + Presence check. If the roll succeeds, the creature acts tame, friendly, and obedient for a number of scenes equal to the number of successes. The effects of this Gift end instantly if your character attacks or otherwise mistreats the creature, or if one of her comrades attacks the character makes no effort to aid or protect it. Repeated use of this Gift on the same creature can justify obtaining the Animal Ken Edge for this beast. Your character can only use this Gift on creatures that are no more intelligent than an ape or monkey.

MANIPULATION

CURSE OF DISPLEASURE

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Manipulation), Universal

Prerequisites: Manipulation ••

The disdain of a god is a dangerous thing, their active enmity even worse.

System: When your character makes an argument, suggests a course of action, or utters a command, anyone who tries to argue against it suffers her Destructive Facet in Complication to their next action arguing against or materially opposing her utterance. If not bought off, both their person and belongings fall to ruin; any equipment reduces its Enhancement by 1 (or loses a point of Armor, as applicable), attempts to aid or heal them suffer +1 Difficulty, and the cost of the Critical Stunt is reduced by 1 for the rest of the scene.

RESOLVE

ONE OF MY LABORS

Keywords: Constant, Attribute (Resolve), Universal

Prerequisites: Resolve •••••

The hero has a personal agenda that is important to her. Perhaps the tasks she must complete are for atonement or perhaps they are simply in search of her own glory, but no matter what when she recognizes one of her tasks she does not fail to rise to the challenge!

System: Once per session, the character may declare that a task in front of her is one of her Labors. For the remainder of the session, so long as she takes on the task alone, she may apply +5 Enhancement to any action made to conquer the Labor.

For every ally that assists with the Labor, the Enhancement decreases by 1.

AIM

RETURNING FIRE

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Aim), Universal

Prerequisites: Aim •••

The hero plucks the javelin meant for him out of the air and hurls it back at his attacker.

System: Spend a point of Inspiration and make an Aim + Dexterity roll. If the roll succeeds, the character catches the projectile and immediately sends it back at the person who fired it. Use the opponent's original attack roll successes against their Defense to determine whether the attack succeeds. If the weapon hits them, it does its normal damage. This Gift works equally well for javelins, arrows, sling stones or thrown rocks, but doesn't allow your character to catch and return siege engine projectiles like ballista bolts.

WORD FROM AFAR

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Aim or Humanities), Universal

Prerequisites: Aim •• or Humanities ••

Writing the name of a hated foe on the shaft arrow makes it long for her heart; inscribing "To Whom It May Concern" on a sling stone embeds the thrower's wit into history and his target's skull.

System: Your character may prepare ammunition (whether it be sling bullets, arrows, javelins, or rarer projectiles) by inscribing it with either the target of their ire or the product of their wit outside of battle. Up to the user's Inspiration times in a scene, such inscribed missiles may have the following effects based on their inscriptions:

Nemesis: A target's name or particular description ("Spartan Soldier" doesn't work, but "The Spartan who killed my innocent horse" does) allows your character's anger and killing determination to guide their bolt. Reduce the cost of the Critical Stunt by the character's Destruction to a minimum of 1. If another source has already reduced the cost to 1, it may instead be reduced to zero.

Parados: A witty or comic phrase allows your character's clever wit and sly determination to reduce the cost of non-damaging Stunts by the higher of their Intuitive or Reflexive facet, to a minimum of 1. If another source has already reduced the cost to 1, it may instead be reduced to zero. It also allows both Shoot and Throw attacks to use the Blinding, Disarm, Feint, Trip, and Sunder Stunts.

You may always Dramatically Edit to retroactively describe a missile prepared in this way, but still counts that against the maximum number they may use in a scene.

ATHLETICS

DOLPHIN-SWIFT STROKES

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Athletics), Universal

Prerequisites: Athletics ••

It's a rare sailor who is as comfortable traveling through the water as across it, but some heroes could swim their way to Aegyptus and back if they had a mind for it.

System: Your character suffers no penalties for trying to swim while weighed down with gear or armor, and doesn't treat moving through water as difficult terrain. When fighting against opponents in water or aboard ships in motion without similar abilities, gain +1 Enhancement to your actions against them.

Repurchase at Inspiration 5 to be able to hold your breath for a scene or an hour, whichever comes last. If you also have the Breath Control Edge, double that time.

ENROBED IN LIGHT

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Athletics, Command), Universal

Prerequisites: Athletics •••, Command •••

Light and dark, white and black, sun and moon. The world's opposing forces create opportunities for those who plan for them.

System: When purchasing this Gift, the player must choose either the Moon (Chosen of Selene) or the Sun (Chosen of Helios). Those who choose the moon learn to dress in a way that lets the darkness shroud them and strike fear into their foes' hearts. When the moon chosen wears all black at night, they gain +1 Scale when trying to hide or ambush. If they wear all white, the moon's light reflects off them, allowing them to cut an imposing and terrifying image against the horizon. They gain a +1-Scale bonus to the first attack they make each combat and on all intimidation rolls. Those chosen by Helios learn to do the reverse. They hide within the light of day when robed in white and appear as an ill-omen of death when robed in black.

PENTATHLETE

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Athletics), Universal

Prerequisites: Athletics •••

The body is a tool of the mind, one that is forged in the flames of practice.

System: The character gains a +1 Enhancement on all Athletics actions and on all checks to escape grapples.

CLOSE COMBAT

FORM THE PHALANX

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Close Combat), Universal

Prerequisites: Close Combat •••

No matter the station, nor the rank, nor the political standing of a single soldier — all are important in the phalanx. The hero understands the importance of teamwork, and personal glory only comes second to the success of the greater mission. In the phalanx, all succeed or fail as one.

System: Your character spends an Inspiration in order to initiate a group effort in combat. The character declares a target or goal that must be agreed upon by all other characters in her group. Once the target is or goal is decided on, players whose characters are in agreement roll Skill + Cunning. The group gains a pool equal to the successes rolled to be spent on Enhancements for all actions toward the objective. Any member of the group may spend up to a maximum of 3 successes from the pool on their turn until the end of the scene.

The pool's minimum starting Enhancement equals the Skill rating of the character who activated this Gift, regardless of the number of successes rolled.

MAZE OF IRON AND BRONZE

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Close Combat), Universal

Prerequisites: Close Combat ••

A drawn weapon promises pain and death to any who dare approach, a sharp edge refuting any approach to the warrior that does not cost blood.

System: Your character may take an action to fight defensively, imposing their Close Combat Skill in Complication on all attacks against them until their next turn. Attackers who don't miss or fail to buy off the Complication suffer an Injury Condition. **Special:** If armed with a Reach weapon, this also applies to enemies attempting to move into Close range with your character.

As an Inspiration 5 repurchase, spend 1 Inspiration to apply this effect without taking an action.

As an Inspiration 7 repurchase, this applies to ranged attacks out to Medium Range, as projectiles are split, hurled back, or impossibly countered from afar.

ONE VS. TWO

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Close Combat), Universal

Prerequisites: Close Combat •••

Two opponents can be defeated as easily as one.

System: If your character is facing two opponents in melee combat, you can spend a point of Inspiration to allow your character to move sufficiently swiftly that he can fight them both without needing to resort to mixed actions. Instead, your character treats each opponent as if he were only facing that one opponent, allowing your character to make two attack rolls with their full dice pool. However, your character cannot use this Gift to make multiple attacks against a single opponent, it only works against multiple opponents. Also, if your character is battling more than two opponents, this Gift allows him to face two of them without mixed actions, but he needs to use mixed actions to fight more than two opponents.

COMMAND

DIVINE DICTATE

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Command), Universal

Prerequisites: Command •••

To disagree with words scented with divine power and ambrosia is to court disaster, the masses turning against anyone foolish enough to gainsay the divine.

System: When your character makes an argument, suggests a course of action, or utters a command, anyone who tries to argue against it suffers your character's Intuitive Facet in Complication to their next action arguing against or materially opposing your character's utterance. If not bought off, all other characters present decrease any positive Attitude they have toward that character or increase a negative Attitude by 1, creating a negative Attitude if they previously didn't have one. You may spend 1 Inspiration to grant +1 Enhancement to all other characters' actions opposing or targeting a character who has fallen afoul of this power's Complication for the rest of the scene.

ENROBED IN LIGHT (P. XX)

HEROIC CALL

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Command, Culture), Universal

Prerequisites: Command •• or Culture ••

There are no shortage of spear-carriers and brave companions in-waiting who respond to the banner of a true hero, as long as they speak with a sure voice and clear purpose.

System: With a scene's effort in any remotely populated area, your character can find willing followers for any heroic errand. You may choose between a number of individuals equal to your Inspiration with the abilities of Minor Threats (**Trinity Continuum Core** p. 140) who always act as a group in combat, or a single individual with the abilities of an Artist or Misthos (p. XX). They will serve loyally as long as not abused, mistreated, or ignored. Use of this power may find additional members to fill out a group which has lost members, but does not otherwise benefit from multiple uses.

Your character may spend 1 Inspiration to have ready allies appear just in time during an action or combat scene, who readily become loyal companions in its aftermath.

A repurchase allows such characters to be of particular use in long-term projects or procedural scenes. Followers automatically find an alternative clue appropriate to their abilities in procedural scenes or removing an additional milestone alongside your character's first success on a Super-Science project.

CULTURE

THE COMEDY OF...

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Culture, Persuasion), Universal

Prerequisites: Culture •••• or Persuasion ••••

Of the Greek Plays, the Comedy expresses social and political criticism under the guise of humor and silliness. The Inspired character uses the absurdity of the Comedy in order to expose the ridiculousness of a situation at hand or a conflict in a moment of tension.

System: Spend an Inspiration to gain the attention of those in the area, despite the Attitudes of the targets to be affected. A character may choose to affect a number of targets up to her rating in Skill using this Gift.

Roll Skill + Cunning and gain Enhancement based on the number of successes using the chart below to diffuse a mounting conflict or tense moment using humor:

SUCCESSES	ENHANCEMENT/ COMPLICATION
1 - 2	+1
3 - 4	+2
5 - 6	+3
6 - 7	+4
8 +	+5

The effects of this Gift immediately end if the character takes hostile action against the targets. This is not a permanent bond or attachment to the individuals affected, and they may not find the situation as funny once the Scene is over.

AN EYE FOR QUALITY

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Culture), Universal

Prerequisites: Culture ••

All craftsmen pray to Hephaestus for his favor so that their works can stand out among the rest. But if every work is a masterpiece, what does that say about the god's quality of goods? Luckily not every work *is* a masterpiece, and she has learned to see whether a craftsperson is truly favored by the gods.

System: Your character can instantly recognize the quality of a piece of work made by a craftsman without the need for a Skill roll. She may still make a roll of Skill + Intellect if she wishes to divine specific details about the item. She may ask questions from the table below equal to the number of successes rolled (minimum 1):

- Was the item made locally?
- Is there a craftsman that is known for this quality/type of work?
- Was this designed to look like another type or quality of item?
- If the item is clearly foreign in design, is there a craftsman that suits this style nearby?
- Does this item seem to fit the quality that the individual would be able to afford?
- Is there anything unique about this item (supernatural or magical in some way)?

GREEK THEATRE

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Culture, Larceny), Universal

Prerequisites: Culture •• or Larceny ••

Lying wasn't second nature to her per se, but it certainly wasn't difficult to do. Who knew that the skill would become popular in the years to come?

System: Spend an Inspiration when your character is discovered in a place she is clearly not supposed to be. This begins her great comedy, as she performs a play of her own making. For the remainder of the scene, she gains a +1 Enhancement to lie about her identity, insist she belongs in this location, or claim that she simply got lost looking for another location entirely. If she is successful in her deception, the character(s) who found her regards her simply as a fool or someone not worth the time spent investigating further.

HEROIC CALL (P. XX)

INFURIATING GIBE

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Culture, Persuasion), Universal

Prerequisites: Culture •• or Persuasion ••

Clever words cut more deeply than bronze blades, and pay no attention to armor while doing it.

System: Your character may make a Culture or Persuasion action when insulting an opponent, opposed by their Integrity. If successful, they become obsessed with avenging the insult for the rest of the scene. This may mean successfully upbraiding or obtaining an apology from your character outside of combat, or directly harming them if violence is already on the table. All actions that don't directly target or include your character suffer your character's Inspiration in Complication. If not bought off, they suffer the difference in increased Difficulty on their next roll out of combat, or in decreased Defense (to a minimum of zero) inside of combat.

A repurchase allows your character to taunt antagonists who don't share languages with them, including animals or strange creatures.

Empathy

Let Me Tell You a Tale

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Empathy), Universal

Prerequisites: Empathy ••••

The adventurer has seen things — horrible things. She has seen the maw of Charybdis, heard the song of the Sirens, and battled wits against the Sphinx! At least, that's what she claims. But damned if she doesn't go into enough detail to make those naysayers skin crawl in fear.

System: Spend a point of Inspiration to activate this Gift for the scene. So long as your character can communicate uninterrupted, she may affect a number of characters equal to her Skill rating with this Gift. Any affected characters are cursed with the Terrorized or Intimidated Atmosphere for the remainder of the scene.

Those who attempt to shout over her or dissuade her from her tale receive a Complication equal to her Destructive Facet on all attempts to do so.

Wild Tongue

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Empathy or Survival), Universal

Prerequisites: Empathy ••• or Survival •••

Ambrosia lightens the tongue and quickens the ears, allowing the hero's messages to make their way to their fellows through the most unlikely messengers.

System: When your character has access to a trained or domesticated animal such as a dog, cat, or pet songbird, they may unerringly send such creatures to deliver messages to any place within a distance the animal might reach simply by describing the recipient of the message and their likely location. The creature will travel without distraction or delay, and gain +2 Enhancement on any rolls for your messenger to avoid interception or diversion by hostile interlopers.

Spend 1 Inspiration to allow any non-hostile animal to deliver a message anywhere within creation it could physically reach, dispatching beetles or whales to deliver your missives. Your messenger can reach anywhere within the known world within a week, anywhere else on Earth within a month, and further realms within the year. Recipients will always recognize the creature as your messenger and understand the intent, even lacking written material or context. "Solon sent this hawk; we will receive reinforcements by dawn!"

Enigmas

Philosopher's Inquiry

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Enigmas or Science), Universal

Prerequisites: Inspiration •••, Enigmas ••• or Science •••

Whether they call it fate or seek some a different understanding, many invisible powers and phenomena are known to the hero, their study of the world giving up many of its secrets.

System: Your character is always aware when Dramatic Editing occurs in their presence, the presence of ambrosia in the environment, and the use of Champion or Talent Gifts and related powers. A moment of concentration and an Enigmas or Science roll allows them to determine the nature of the Gift, power, or energies.

Scent of Gold

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Enigmas, Science, or Survival), Universal

Prerequisites: Enigmas ••, Science ••, or Survival ••

There is some deeper connection between the hero and the shining miracle that transforms the world. They can sense its presence, its absence, and the surest route to more golden glory.

System: Your character always knows when ambrosia is anywhere nearby (approximately within a kilometer outdoors or anywhere inside a contiguous structure), and through smell, tingling intuition, or stranger means can track it down without issue unless it's been physically sealed away. Similarly, they can tell when places or creatures have been changed by ambrosia. If someone actively conceals ambrosia or tries to hide changes it has wrought, your character gains +2 Enhancement on any actions to see through such concealment or deception.

A repurchase allows your character to sense ambrosia over great distances. They always know the direction of the nearest sources of ambrosia and their relative sizes, and may spend an Inspiration to make any trip there with impossible speed, traveling up to twice as fast as unaided travel. Mundane

inconveniences and threats simply fail to impact them, and you gain +2 Enhancement to avoid those impelled by Source equivalent forces.

HUMANITIES

I'VE SEEN THIS BEFORE

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Humanities, Survival), Universal

Prerequisites: Survival ••• or Humanities •••

The hero can see much more than the writing on the wall. She notices patterns and trends that may come into play in ways unknown to the less perceptive eye. Using this knowledge, she can act before an opponent can strike.

System: Spend an Inspiration. The character surveys the area, quickly taking in details and information in order to stay a step ahead of those around her. The hero may ask questions equal to her Skill rating regarding the environment and people around her, which the Storyguide must answer honestly (if not directly):

- Who here is against me (or our group)?
- What is the path of least resistance to exit this place?
- Are there any traps in place to hinder me (or our group)?
- How can the situation be changed to favor my goals?
- Who is the most likely to make a hostile action against me (or my group?)
- Are there any Gifts or Edges being used against us in this moment?

When acting on the information gained in this way, gain a +2 Enhancement.

NATURAL PHILOSOPHY

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Humanities, Science), Universal

Prerequisites: Humanities •• or Science ••

The world is filled with so many strange and wonderful things, and by the will of fate or the attractions of inner genius the hero's musings tend to result in many strange encounters at just the right time.

System: Reduce the Inspiration cost for Dramatically Editing strange encounters with animals or natural phenomena by 1. This explicitly allows encounters with bizarre animals or phenomena that would normally be impossible on Earth, the hero's affinity drawing possibilities into their immediate surroundings for the scene. Strange animals encountered this way will not harm the character or their companions unless harmed or otherwise incited to violence, and natural phenomena will give them (if not others present) plenty of time to react. The Storyguide is encouraged to suggest Twists of Fate (p. XX) relating to the character's interests and previously established strange encounters.

Repurchase at Inspiration 5 to allow such edits to last beyond the immediate scene, allowing for such strange discoveries to count as materials for Super-Science projects.

INTEGRITY

TEARS OF PASSION

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Integrity), Universal

Prerequisites: Integrity •••

The true hero cannot contain their emotions, the truth writ across their face and the furious force behind their actions.

System: When your character acts out recklessly, heedlessly, or counterproductively from emotional investment for a Bond or Attitude they possess, at the end of the scene they gain the Condition Empowered. Acting out should never be calculated or designed to benefit long-term plans for a character. For example: if Tiye sees an ambrosial brew that might cure her afflicted lover, she wouldn't gain Empowered for sensibly trying to bargain for it or carefully concocting a heist to gain possession of it, but would for trying to steal it at the first opportunity despite the risk involved.

A character with Empowered may end the Condition to add +1 relevant Scale to an action they're attempting, or to immediately gain 1 point of Inspiration.

LARCENY

GREEK THEATRE (P. XX)

MEDICINE

BALM OF HEALING

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Medicine), Universal

Prerequisites: Medicine ••

She uses the transformative power of ambrosia to heal both herself and others, allowing her to cure injuries, diseases, and toxins.

System: Your character spends a point of Inspiration, and then makes a Medicine + Intellect action. This healing can mend both Injury and Status Conditions. Injury Conditions cost successes equal to their unmodified penalty (one for Bruised, two for Injured, and four for Maimed), while a Physical Status Condition costs three successes. Healing aggravated damage requires twice the number of successes as usual. However, mortal bodies can only accept so much healing at a time. You can only use this ability on ordinary mortals once a day, but because of their bodies' previous contact with ambrosia, you can use this Gift multiple times a day on other Champions, Oracles, and Olympians.

PERSUASION

THE COMEDY OF... (P. XX)

GATHER THE ARGONAUTS

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Persuasion), Universal

Prerequisite: Persuasion ••••, Patroclus to Achilles

The hardships of life are easier to face with a band of brothers at one's side.

System: This Gift upgrades its prerequisite to give the Inspired character access to five individuals. These individuals could be childhood friends, a military unit, or vagabonds picked up over a long journey. The player should choose one Arena (Physical, Mental, Social) to be the group's area of expertise. When sent to perform a task separate from the character, the band has a dice pool of 8 for their area of expertise and 6 for everything else. In combat the group acts as a mob **(Trinity Core,** p. 140.) They take up a slot on the initiative roster. They roll 6 for all actions (or 8 if Physical was chosen as their area of expertise.) They gain a +1 Enhancement for each active member of the group after the first. If they are Taken Out it takes them a month to recover.

INFURIATING GIBE (P. XX)

MASTERY OF BEASTS

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Persuasion), Universal

Prerequisites: Persuasion ••

She can command the loyalty of beasts as easily as that of people.

System: By spending a point of Inspiration, your character can command someone else's domestic animal, allowing your character to even countermand the other person's commands. If someone orders a horse to charge or a dog to attack, your character could either cause this animal to flee or even to attack someone else. How easy this is depends upon how the person normally treats the animal she is attempting to control (see the table below). Unless the person treats the animal poorly or does not treat them well and has not had the animal long, your character cannot make the animal attack their owner, but she could make it attack one of their comrades. If the owner is present, your character must make an opposed roll against the animal's owner. If the animal has been left on their own with orders from their owner, like a dog set to guard a house or yard, then she merely needs to succeed in an ordinary roll.

TREATMENT	BONUS OR PENALTY
The person regularly abuses or neglects the animal	+2 Enhancement
The person treats the animal adequately, but has not had it long	+1 Enhancement
The person treats the animal adequately	No bonus or penalty
The person treats their animal well	+1 Difficulty

PRECURSOR OF THE PNYX

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Persuasion), Universal

Prerequisites: Persuasion •••

The Pnyx may not yet be active in its assemblies, but the lack of a meeting place has never stopped those with opinions from being heard.

System: Spend the scene swaying a gathering of individuals to your side in a disagreement or public debate. Roll Persuasion + Manipulation to convince a number of characters that you and your group are in the right in a moral or intellectual conundrum. One success gathers their support long enough for your opponent to be discredited in the gathering's eyes.

You may spend an Inspiration to incite the swayed crowd to argue alongside you (and then for you)

as their outrage at the opposition grows, causing a small amount of unrest in the immediate area.

You may spend an additional Inspiration to deepen the embarrassment of your opponent and solidify the memory of this social victory amongst the crowd for long-term benefits, such as: Increased social standing amongst a particular group, a +2 Complication for the opponent to take public action against you, or a +2 Enhancement when searching for allies in a long-term goal, etc.

PILOT

FAST TRAVEL

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Pilot), Universal

He can find shortcuts, even when none should exist and can lead caravans and soldiers to their destination in record time.

System: It doesn't matter if your character is running from one quarter of a city to another to warn a magistrate about treason, leading soldiers marching from Athens to Corinth, or if he is sailing a ship from Crete to Aegyptus. In all cases, your character can make the journey in half the time. This Gift works for all forms of travel, and if riding, running, or marching you can have a number of people accompany you on your journey equal to five times your character's Intuitive Facet.

GUIDE THE SHIPS HOME

Keywords: Constant, Attribute (Pilot), Universal

Prerequisites: Pilot •••

The hero always points her proud toward safe harbor.

System: The character's mastery of tides and winds grants them +1 Scale to all sailing actions.

WHERE THE CURRENT LEADS

Keywords: Momentary, Pilot or Survival, Universal

Prerequisites: Pilot •• or Survival ••

Strange currents lead sailors to unexpected islands just as wild strands of fate may tug heroes to unforeseen rendezvouses.

System: Whenever your character gives their next destination over to fortune, they're sure to find adventure whether traveling by land, sea, or stranger means. When first coming upon a new threat to confront or problem to solve due to this in a session, they gain 1 Inspiration which may take them above their normal limit but is lost if not spent before the session's end.

Repurchase at Inspiration 5 enables them to cross impossible distances when doing so, ambrosia's

influence bringing them to wherever they might be needed despite intervening distance or time, refreshed and ready to face new challenges. Whenever they use this power, they heal up to their Intuitive Facet in Injury Conditions by the time they arrive at their destination.

SCIENCE

NATURAL PHILOSOPHY (P. XX)

PHILOSOPHER'S INQUIRY (P. XX)

SCENT OF GOLD (P. XX)

SURVIVAL

I'VE SEEN THIS BEFORE (P. XX)

PACK LEADER

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Survival), Universal

Prerequisites: Survival ••

Regardless of whether he is facing a pack of dogs or wolves, a herd of horses, or any other gathering of social animals, the Champion can temporarily become their leader.

System: By spending a point of Inspiration, the animals accept your character as their leader for the next full scene and can persuade these animals to do anything that their normal leader could. Your character can't make animals sacrifice their life for him, but he can make them fight, flee, or perform similar actions. Your character can command a small flock of several dozen birds, and an equal number of small mammals, like cats or rats, or he can command a number of larger animals like wolves, lions, or horses equal to twice his Intuitive Facet. However, your character can only command one group of a single type of animal at a time.

SCENT OF GOLD (P. XX)

TIRELESS HUNTER

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Survival), Universal

Prerequisites: Survival ••

Once he has started to track a beast or a foe, nothing can throw him off the trail.

System: As long as your character has had a clear look at his target, he can track that person even if they leave your character's sight and don't leave tracks. Spend a point of Inspiration when the character is looking at a target out to long range. For a number of days equal to your total Intuitive Facet rating, he automatically knows the target's direction and approximate distance.

WHERE THE CURRENT LEADS (P. XX)

WILD TONGUE (P. XX)

Only Champion characters may use the following Gifts.

LUCK GIFTS

The following Gifts are luck-based.

ANATHEMA

Keywords: Momentary, Luck, Champion

The world is vast and full of beings invulnerable to all but a single metal, herb, or incantation. Luckily, the Champion is well-read and even better prepared.

System: Spend an Inspiration. The Champion takes a round preparing an attack against a creature of myth. During this round, the player must tell the Storyguide and other players what this mythical creature's weakness is as he applies it to his weapon or prepares to strike the foe. On the following turn, if the attack hits and deals damage, the damage dealt is a unique Injury Condition called Anathema that applies a 3-point penalty to all actions that use supernatural power. This Gift does not function against other Inspired humans.

IN THE MODEL OF PROMETHEUS

Keywords: Momentary, Luck, Champion

Fate is sometimes kind to those who don't realize how outmatched they truly are.

Systems: Once per session, the Champion's player may spend an Inspiration to resolve a single roll disregarding Scale in a single arena.

NIKE'S BLESSING

Keywords: Momentary, Luck, Champion

Nothing is impossible for a Champion, only improbable. They make themselves, and others believe that oceans can be crossed, walls vaulted, and incredible odds overcome through their words alone. It's as if fate itself is on their side.

System: Spend one Inspiration and choose a Skill relevant to a goal the Champion wants to accomplish. The Champion makes a speech during that round convincing themselves or another that a prescribed action is possible. For the rest of the scene, they or their subject gain +1 Scale on all Skill tests pursuing the prescribed action. A person can only be subject to this Gift once per day.

PRAYER TO MOUNT OLYMPUS

Keywords: Constant, Luck, Champion

The Champion has learned the words and rituals to invoke the gods in their favor. These rites are done by mortal priests across Greece every day to various effects, but fate always answers a Champion. Whether it's the gods listening and responding or the Champion shaping luck in their favor is a secret known to the gods alone.

System: When the player chooses this Gift, their character learns three prayers. They may purchase the Gift up to two additional times to learn three more prayers each time. By default, a Champion may only benefit from one prayer at a time and only once per scene. Once a Champion has purchased this Gift twice, they may keep two prayers active.

- **Aphrodite:** The Champion gains a +1 Enhancement when interacting with people for the first time. In addition, their appearance is always pristine, even in the middle of combat.
- **Ares:** The Champion gains a +1 Enhancement on their first attack in each combat. In addition, they may look at two armies and tell which is stronger with a glance.
- **Artemis:** The Champion gains a +1 Enhancement on all attempts to track or locate a person. In addition, should they view anything that would be detrimental to their health, they may avert their gaze reflexively.
- **Athena:** The Champion gains a +1 Enhancement on all actions to lead troops in battle and on their Defense roll each combat.
- **Hades:** The Champion gains a +1 Enhancement on all actions dealing with the dead. In addition, they can find their way to the nearest gate to the Underworld.
- **Hephaestus:** The Champion gains a +1 Enhancement on all technology actions. In addition, they can perfectly identify the skill of the craftsman they meet.
- **Hermes:** The Champion gains a +1 Enhancement on Larceny actions and can run without tiring for the scene.

- **Poseidon:** The Champion gains a +1 Enhancement on all actions involving sea craft. In addition, she can ensure clear skies for a day.
- **Zeus:** The Champion gains a +1 Enhancement on attempts to learn what one individual of their choice finds most attractive.

Aptitude Gifts

Following are new Aptitude Gifts for Champion characters.

Cunning

Cunning Hero's Charade

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Cunning), Skill (Larceny), Champion

Prerequisites: Larceny ••••

The Champion's disguises could fool the gods themselves.

System: By spending an Inspiration, the Champion may flawlessly disguise himself to conceal his identity or appear to be a specific type of person, such as an aristocrat, beggar, priest, and so on. This still requires appropriate props and trappings. This disguise cannot be pierced by mundane characters, but the Inspired and characters with Source may Clash against the Champion's Larceny. Even on success, a character who pierces the disguise cannot discern the Champion's true identity, only that he is not who he appears to be. The disguise can be maintained for a day before the Champion must use this Gift again.

Pathos

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Cunning), Champion

Prerequisites: Cunning •••

Emotions are as easy as words carved in stone.

System: Make an Empathy + Cunning roll against a target. For the remainder of the conversation after activating the Gift, you may spend successes from this roll to learn the target's current emotional state or a relevant goal of theirs. Targets can oppose this Gift with an Enigmas + Composure roll.

Polytropos

Keywords: Constant, Attribute (Cunning), Champion

Prerequisites: Cunning ••••

The Champion has a gift for trickery and deceit — a hero's virtue, despite what the outwitted may say.

System: The Champion gains +3 Enhancement on influence and procedural actions that involve deceit, lying and trickery. Her lies always seem reasonable, and even the most absurd lie is believed on success for at least a single round. This benefit applies broadly, from influencing others on what to believe to concealing evidence of the Champion's plots.

By spending an Inspiration, the Champion may even use this Gift to Clash supernatural powers to see through deception, rolling her Cunning + Inspiration against the opposing character. On success, she may fool even supernatural powers, giving off whatever result she wishes as appropriate to the power used.

Stamina

I'll Never Stop

Keywords: Constant, Attribute (Stamina), Champion

Prerequisites: Stamina •••

The Champion hunts something (or possibly someone) tirelessly and with little regard for their own safety or well-being. Perhaps it is madness, or perhaps she has simply been slighted one too many times by this individual. No matter what drives her, she will not be deterred from her quarry.

System: Spend an Inspiration when investigating an item, location, or person aligned with one of her aspirations. For the remainder of the session, the Champion gains +3 Enhancement for any investigation effort made in pursuit of achieving the aspiration.

Presence

The Call to Teamwork

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Presence), Champion

When the Champion gives her all, her comrades are inspired to do the same.

System: Your character makes any task performed by a group of people working together go easier, faster, and better by talking to her fellows and asking them to do their best. If your character and others are performing some task together, regardless of whether your character and her comrades are all scribes copying the same manuscript, scholars searching a disorganized library, or laborers unloading the same merchant ship, you can spend Inspiration to

cause the work to take half the normal time and be done exceptionally well, gaining a + 1 Enhancement if applicable. Your character can aid a total number of workers equal to five times your total Reflective Facet. This Gift also specifically works to reduce the time for crafting and other Complex actions.

USURPER'S CROWN

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Presence), Champion

Prerequisites: Presence •••

By denouncing her enemy before the public and the gods, the Champion has the power to overthrow tyrants (or become one).

System: The Champion may spend Inspiration while publicly denouncing the current regime of the city-state she is in, automatically succeeding at an Influence action that shifts the Atmosphere to negative 2, representing discontent aimed at the local ruler. Initially this may create discontent which can be fomented into something more by the Champion, but if the local ruler has suffered any kind of setback or inconvenience which has threatened the prosperity of the people, the resultant Atmosphere can lead to a riot, or a mob being formed.

Alternatively, if the ruler is in the Champion's presence, she may rebuke him directly. In addition to the negative Atmosphere, she inflicts a +2 Complication on the ruler's commands toward his subjects. Failure to buy off this Complication results in the ruler's actions further enraging and offending his subjects, worsening their Attitude toward him by –2.

AIM

TRICK SHOT

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Aim), Champion

The Champion could challenge Artemis herself in a shooting contest.

System: Your character excels at inhumanly precise shots. He can shoot a sword out of someone's hand without harming them, toss a javelin to sever a crucial rope on a ship's rigging, or throw a dagger to jam a door closed.

Additionally, if you spend a point of Inspiration and make an Aim action, your character can ignore one level of an enemy's soft armor.

ATHLETICS

ARTEMISIAN STEPS

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Athletics), Champion

Prerequisites: Pentathlete

In competition, the Champion's swiftness is unsurpassed.

System: Spend an Inspiration to automatically succeed at a roll in a complex action representing a race where the Champion is on foot. She clears the milestone with successes equal to her Destructive Facet, or one more success than her opponent, whichever is higher. Inspired and characters with Source may Clash with Athletics.

Alternatively, the Champion may spend an Inspiration to run swiftly and without tiring for a day, increasing her Speed Scale by 1. Once she arrives at her destination, she must take an Athletics + Stamina action to avoid collapsing from exhaustion.

DONNING ATHENA'S HELM

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Athletics), Champion

Prerequisites: Athletics ••••

Ares may be the god of war, but he has never bested Athena.

System: Add the character's Athletics rating to their Defense dice pool against Physical attacks. For each Resilience Attribute the Champion has at max value after the first, the Champion gains a one-dot Enhancement bonus to their Defense.

THE EPIC OF A CHAMPION

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Athletics, Survival), Champion

Prerequisites: Athletics •••• or Survival ••••

The Champion recognizes that all her struggles are merely tests against their iron will. She does not waver against the storm, she does not falter against the beast, and she does not yield even in the face of the gods' divine might!

System: The Champion may spend Inspiration equal to any Complications that are currently affecting her. Each point of Inspiration spent this way will eliminate the Complication for the remainder of the scene. The Champion then rolls Skill + Resolve and gains an Enhancement for each success, maximum 5.

The Complications subverted by using this Gift are not avoided, merely delayed for later use by the

Storyguide after the scene has ended. At any point after the scene, the Storyguide may use the number of Complications in a later scene.

Close Combat

Choke on Your Ambrosia

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Close Combat), Champion

Prerequisites: Close Combat ••••, Vision of Panoptes

The Champion strikes swiftly and with great precision, targeting and disrupting the flow of ambrosia running through the body of another Inspired.

System: The Champion may purchase an additional Stunt after a Close Combat attack.

Achilles Heel: (Variable Successes) This Stunt applies a Complication to the target with a rating equal to successes spent +1. A target with this Complication cannot spend Inspiration until they buy it off.

Hoplon, Spatha, and Doru Synergy

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Close Combat), Champion

Prerequisites: Close Combat •••

While there are a variety of weapons available to Hellenistic Champions, no three weapons are more associated with Grecian warriors than these.

System: The Champion has trained extensively with the shield, short sword, and spear. They gain benefits when wielding any two of the three.

Spear and Shield: The spear's superior range and the shield's unparalleled protection grant the warrior a +1 Enhancement to their Defense.

Spear and Sword: This unorthodox fighting style allows the Champion to reroll a Close Combat attack once per combat.

Sword and Shield: The stable base of the sword and shield makes it more challenging to disarm or trip the warrior. Opponents need 2 additional successes to purchase the disarm or trip Stunts.

Pankration: Waiting for the Bull

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Close Combat), Champion

Prerequisites: Close Combat ••• Might •• Dexterity •••, and Pankratiast

A pankratiast prefers their fights unarmed and has the tools to make others play by their rules.

System: When taking the Defense or Full Defense action, the pankratiast may hold extra successes to spend on Stunts against anyone who tries and fails to attack her. They may purchase, Disarm, Feint, Trip, or Shove for the same cost as though they had made a Close Combat attack.

War Becomes Her

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Close Combat), Champion

Prerequisites: Close Combat ••••

The Champion knows war and does not fear the ever-shifting tide of combat. No matter the surprise, she does not falter as she keeps her eyes fixed on the goal.

System: The Champion may spend 1 Inspiration. When in combat, she may declare a character her opponent for the scene and so long as she pursues violence against them, she may neutralize a source of Complication equal to her Skill rating.

The Champion may spend an additional 1 Inspiration to neutralize a second source of Complication equal to her Skill rating.

Command

Like Helios

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Command, Pilot), Champion

Prerequisites: Command •••• or Pilot ••••

Before Apollo commanded his chariot across the sky to bring the sun on its journey, Helios was the deity that delivered the sun from East to West. Like Helios, though her great skill may have been forgotten, she guides her chariot with expertise that even the best of charioteers can only dream of.

System: Spend an Inspiration when your character is involved in a Race, Chase, or Pursuit on either horseback or in a chariot. She may add her Intuitive Facet as Enhancement in order to gain the upper hand during the scene so long as she continues to pilot a chariot or horse for the duration of the scene.

An additional Inspiration spent allows the Champion to act first in the scene.

Larceny

Cunning Hero's Charade (p. XX)

Mirror Shield

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Larceny), Champion

Prerequisites: Larceny •••

The lands are full of creatures that can kill with a glance, a breath, or a word, though not all are immune to their own attacks. Gorgons can be turned to stone, hydras can be poisoned, and chimera burn like any other beast.

System: This Gift allows your character to turn the powers of a creature onto itself. When a Champion is targeted by an enemy ability, they may sacrifice any defensive action to roll Larceny + Dexterity. If the Champion scores more successes than the person attacking them, the attacker suffers the effects of the Gift instead of the Champion. One cannot invoke this Gift against mundane attacks, nor social rolls unenhanced by a Gift or supernatural power.

MEDICINE

DETER THE PSYCHOPOMP

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Medicine), Champion

Prerequisites: Medicine •••

The psychopomps do their grim work regardless of mortal concepts of good and evil. The wise Champion knows that their neutrality can be a great boon when seeking to keep an ally from slipping into the realm of Hades.

System: The Champion must be within Close Range of a dying character to utilize this Gift. The Champion then spends a point of Inspiration in order to confer with a psychopomp sent to claim the soul of a dying character. Once the psychopomp has been engaged with, the Champion must make a Resolve + Medicine roll to convince the psychopomp that it is not yet the character's fate to die. Through medical explanation and confidence, the psychopomp can be deterred from claiming the character for a number of turns equal to the successes rolled.

If this Gift is successfully used on a character that is Taken Out rather than outright dying, the psychopomp will lock the Taken Out character's body in a liminal state, so that no damage caused to them during this Gift's Edges effect may cause them to pass on to the other side.

PANACEA

Keywords: Momentary, Medicine, Champion

Prerequisites: Medicine ••••

Longevity for a Champion is not found in their ability to kill but in their ability to survive. This Gift grants the Champion the ability to use various salves, poultices, and other medicines. The Champion gains a +1-Scale bonus on all Medicine tests and can spend Inspiration to apply poultices to another person that halves the coalescence time needed to overcome any Injury.

PILOT

LIKE HELIOS (P. XX)

PEERLESS DRIVER

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Pilot), Champion

Prerequisites: Pilot ••

Whether she is riding a horse, steering a chariot, or captaining a boat, the Champion can extract more speed from any vehicle than ordinary mortals.

System: Spend a point of Inspiration to increase the Speed Scale of any vehicle the character drives or pilots by +1 for the next scene. In addition, while this Gift is in effect, your character also eliminates or reduces one environmental Complication by 2 levels while piloting this animal or vehicle. Complications that can be reduced include bad terrain, unfavorable winds, and bad weather. This Gift won't let your character gallop across a lake, but not only can it help her win a horse race, she can also captain a war galley safely through the worst storms, or ride a chariot over broken and rocky terrain at top speed without injury or discomfort.

SUCCESSES	RESULT
1	The Beast does not attack, but instead roars or calls out its warning to give you an opportunity to leave.
2	The Beast turns away from you, recognizing that a conflict you would not be wise.
3-4	The Beast departs, but in its departure reveals something useful (edible berries, discarded satchel from previous travelers, an abandoned camp with supplies, etc.)
5 +	The Beast recognizes the potential of befriending you for the time being and joins you for the remainder of the session.

Survival

My Mother Was a Nymph

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Survival), Champion

Prerequisites: Survival •••

She has always felt at home in the wild places of the world, away from civilization, the loudness of orators, and the clanging of metalsmiths. The Champion walks freely among the beasts, unafraid of their teeth and claws — for there is respect here.

System: The Champion leaves no tracks when walking through the wilderness, instead leaving the grass and mud undisturbed as she strides through the wild. The beasts do not run from her, predator she may be. In addition, the predators of the wild also pay her respect when she treads into their domain.

The Champion rolls Survival + Presence when a hungry predator crosses her path. The Chart below determines the outcome of the interaction.

Olympian Gifts

Only Olympian characters may use the following Gifts.

Aptitude Gifts

Following are new Aptitude Gifts for Olympian characters.

Intellect

Geras Beyond One's Years

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Intellect), Olympian

Prerequisite: Intellect ••••

Time is a domain only truly understood by the Titan Cronus.

System: With this Gift, the Olympian can glimpse the mind of their future self. For the cost of one Inspiration, they gain +2 Scale on all mental actions for the scene. Sadly, one cannot glimpse the future without making themselves accountable to it. At any point during the rest of the game session, the Storyguide may declare one of the player's failures as a botch.

Halting the March of Ages

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Intellect), Olympian

Prerequisite: Intellect ••••, Geras Beyond One's Years

The Olympian's mastery over minutes and seconds allows him to stare down time itself and force it to blink.

System: For the cost of an Inspiration, the Olympian may freeze the world around them for a number of rounds equal to the player's successes on a Command + Intellect roll. While time is stopped, the Olympian may move freely but cannot interact with the other living beings. They can manipulate the world around them by using the complicate action to make another character's following action more difficult after the time stop ends. When this Gift is activated, anyone else with the Gift may activate it reflexively, allowing anyone with the Gift to operate normally during the time freeze.

Holy Ground

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Intellect), Olympian

Prerequisites: Inspiration •••, Intellect •••

The world responds to the divine will, leaping to serve the Olympian's whims and chasten their foes.

System: Spend 1 Inspiration to enliven the environment out to Close Range for the scene. Trees and plants twist, turn, and act as limbs for your character, earth and stone arrange themselves as desired, and even man-made structures try to comply, with doors and shutters closing or opening at the Olympian's slightest desire. Any actions your character takes that would benefit from environmental shifting gain +1 Enhancement, and they may create or remove Difficult Terrain or Light Cover with an action.

An Inspiration 5 repurchase grants attacks made with the environment two appropriate Weapon Tags of your choice, and you may choose to use Close Combat or Ranged Combat + Intellect when making them.

An Inspiration 7 repurchase allows your character to enliven the environment out to Medium Range, while an additional Inspiration 9 repurchase allows it out to Long

SENSE CASTING

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Intelligence), Olympian

Prerequisites: Infinitely Penetrating Gaze

The Olympian can extend the reach of her sight and hearing far beyond what any mortal can manage.

System: As long as your character has a clear line of sight and spends a point of Inspiration, for the next full scene she can direct her sight and hearing at any location within Extreme Range. This Gift allows your character to listen to a whispered conversation 10 meters away just as well as she could recognize people standing on the deck of a war galley several kilometers away. Your character must select the point she wishes to observe when your character uses this Gift.

CUNNING

INFINITELY PENETRATING GAZE

Keywords: Constant, Attribute (Cunning), Olympian

Prerequisites: Cunning ••

A god's gaze is not like a human's; neither fog nor smoke can avert its path, nor can stone walls prevent her from hearing.

System: Your character ignores any effects that would increase Difficulty or apply Complication to attempts to notice things. A moment's concentration allows them to see or hear through objects less dense than solid stone or metal, and spending an Inspiration point allows them to see and hear through even the most durable mundane material for the scene. If a power would block your character's senses, gain +2 Enhancement on the Clash roll.

MASTERY OF FORMS

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Cunning), Olympian

Prerequisites: Inspiration •••, Cunning ••

Divine grace buoyed by ambrosia allows a host of miracles, the Olympian transforming water into olive oil, burnt ash into fine provender, or slag into brilliant bronze.

System: Spend 1 Inspiration and roll Inspiration + Cunning to transform as much plant or nonliving substance as the Olympian can hold into another. Increase the Difficulty by +1 for each of the following changes that are required

- Liquid to solid
- Inorganic to organic
- Simple to complex
- Ordinary to valuable.

For example, to turn water (liquid, inorganic, simple, ordinary) into a statue of Zeus made from gold (solid, inorganic, complex, valuable) would be Difficulty 4.

Repurchase at Inspiration 5 to increase the amount transformed by +1 Size Scale.

PUT ON THE BEAST'S SHAPE

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Cunning), Olympian, Transformation

The Olympian borrows an animal's shape, climbing with the ease of a mountain goat or swimming like a dolphin.

System: The wondrous power of ambrosia allows your character to transform his flesh into that of another animal. However, your character can only transform into a single animal, which you must select when choosing this Gift. This animal must be Size 0 (wolf), Size 1 (human), or Size 2 (horse or dolphin). Depending upon the animal, it may increase its Speed Scale by +1 for running, or perhaps, like dolphins or seals, it may swim at Speed Scale 2. In addition, it may possess a single melee attack with a number of points of tags equal to your character's Destructive Facet. Suitable tags include Brutal, Deadly, Piercing, Pushing, or Quality 2 or 3. This animal could also possess up to two points of soft armor, but the total of all Weapon Tags and all points of soft armor cannot exceed your character's Destructive Facet. This transformation lasts until your character wishes to transform back to their normal form, or until they sleep or fall unconscious, in which case they automatically return to their human form.

COMPOSURE

HEPHAESTUS'S MEASURE

Keywords: Constant, Attribute (Composure), Olympian

Prerequisites: Composure •••

Feel the strength of iron by hefting the blade, know the provenance of tin in bronze armor by its scent in the sun, know exactly when a pot will shatter in your hands by the echoes made when it is

filled; to the divine, there is no earthly object which is unknowable.

System: Casual contact or cursory inspection is enough for your character to know the exact composition and construction of a mundane object, down to specific details of its creation. Your character ignores up to their Reflective Facet in increased Difficulty or Complication to any rolls to determine similar information about artifacts or objects made of unearthly or otherwise strange substances.

Gain +1 Enhancement to break, recreate, or modify objects or device comprehended by this ability.

MIGHT

ATTAINING A GIANT'S STATURE

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Might), Olympian

The Olympian towers over all who would challenge him.

System: When you spend a point of Inspiration activate this Gift, your character increase his Size Scale by +1, causing your character to grow to roughly twice his normal height and eight times his weight. Growing to these prodigious proportions also increases your character's Durability and Might Scales by +1. However, your character's greatly increased weight means that he could easily collapse the upper floor of a building if it weren't very sturdily built, and if your character could even fit there in the first place. This increased Size lasts for one scene unless your character chooses to end it sooner.

A BIGGER DORU

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Might), Olympian

Prerequisites: Strength •••

While in the hero's hand, the spear is small, but once hurled forth, it grows in size and mass until its size matches the might of the wielder.

System: The Olympian may spend Inspiration when they make a throw or shoot attack. The attack's Power Scale increases by one as the projectile

quintuples in Size, reducing the successes needed to purchase the Critical Stunt by two.

BRONZE BENDS, IRON BREAKS.

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Might), Olympian

Prerequisites: Might ••••

Bronze is a strong metal for a man but has no chance against the power of the Olympian.

System: Spend 1 Inspiration for the character to smash a weapon into a target with more force and velocity than even the strongest metals can survive. The Power Scale of the attack is increased by one, but mundane weapons shatter on impact, reducing the successes needed to purchase the Critical Stunt by two. Weapons made or enhanced with Super-Science are not destroyed but merely broken and must be repaired (with a Difficulty equal to the number of positive tags on it) before they can be used again. This Gift does no harm against the Olympian if the weapon she uses is her bare hand or foot.

CENTAUR

Keywords: Constant, Attribute (Might), Olympian, Transformation

The bizarre power of ambrosia did more than merely enhance your natural abilities, it physically blended you with another creature, in this case, a horse. Your character's body looks as it always does above the waist, but below your character's waist, her body is that of a horse, or possibly a large deer.

System: This transformation provides your character with a wealth of advantages, along with a few serious limitations. She gains +1 to Might, Size, and Speed Scales, along with an additional Bruised Injury Condition box. In addition, you can use the Swift Edge or other powers to further increase your character's Speed Scale. However, your character has difficulty with stairs, she cannot climb ladders or other nearly vertical surfaces, and cannot sit in chairs or squeeze through small spaces. In addition, her increase in Size Scale means that your character nearly fills a small room.

HERCULEAN EFFORT

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Might), Olympian

Prerequisites: Might ••••

For an Olympian, limits are only minor hurdles to be crossed in leaps and bounds. There is no limit to what an Olympian may achieve even when the world would be against them. All that is required is to reach deep down, dig her heels in, and keep pushing forward against it all.

System: Spend 3 Inspiration when facing a character of up to Scale 4. For the remainder of the scene, the Olympian's actions treat the target's Scale as if it is only Scale 1. Additionally, the Olympian gains Enhancement equal to her Attribute rating on all actions made against the target until the scene ends.

For an Additional 2 Inspiration, the Olympian may choose a second target up to Scale 4 to affect with this Gift.

TO PUT THE WORLD ON YOUR SHOULDERS

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Might), Olympian

Prerequisite: Might ••••

For an Olympian, strength is a status measured not in pounds but by deeds.

System: Spend 1 Inspiration for +2 Power Scale for any single action. This action can be short, such as giving a villain a taste of her strength with a punch to the jaw, or long, such as lifting a mountain.

DEXTERITY

CALLING SKYFIRE

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Dexterity), Olympian

The Olympian hurls a mighty bolt of lightning at his foes.

System: Your character can call down lightning from the heavens. He must be outdoors or at minimum not underground or under a roof, and must concentrate for two full rounds. On the third round, at your character's normal initiative, lightning comes down from the heavens. This lightning bolt affects everything within Close range of its target and can blast through city walls and gates as easily as it can blast your foes. Using this Gift requires you to spend a point of Inspiration and make an Aim + Dexterity roll to direct the lightning.

ATTACK	RANGE	DAMAGE TYPE	TAGS
Lightning Bolts	5	Medium	Destructive, Explosive (ranged), Ranged (Long)

ATTACK	RANGE	DAMAGE TYPE	TAGS
Flame Bolts	4	Medium Incendiary	Deadly, Incendiary,Ranged (Medium)

EYES OF FIRE

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Dexterity), Olympian

Flames burst from the Olympian's eyes, incinerating her foes.

System: Make an Aim + Dexterity roll. The character shoots bolts of fire from her eyes, breathes it from her mouth, or hurls fiery javelins at her enemies. Regardless of how your character uses this Gift, this fire functions as a weapon as detailed below.

FANTASTIC FORM (P. XX)

HEKATONCHEIRES EMULATION STANCE

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Dexterity), Olympian

Prerequisites: Dexterity ••••

The Olympian is an avatar of war. They move so fast and with such ferocity that their foes say, "It's like they're wielding 100 blades." The hero leaves only broken blades and bodies in their wake.

System: The Olympian spends an Inspiration and may ignore up to three points of Defense from targets of the attack roll. The Olympian can ignore three points of Defense from a single target, one point of Defense from three different targets, or any other combination.

INVIOLATE FORM

Keywords: Constant, Attribute (Dexterity), Olympian

Prerequisites: Dexterity ••

It's unimaginable that the godly body might be touched by the base and earthly, and so the divine simply refuses to allow contact with the profane.

System: Your character can never be touched, manhandled, or physically constrained by characters untouched by ambrosia or similar powers unless they benefit from a relevant source of Scale. In combat, you gain +2 Defense against characters without access to Inspiration, Source, or similar abilities, and +1 to Defense against characters that are.

As an Inspiration 5 repurchase, your character may spend 1 Inspiration once per battle to simply avoid an attack. The attack simply misses unless created by a Gift or similar power, in which case your character makes an opposed Dexterity + Inspiration roll against the effect with +2 Enhancement.

ONE-MAN PHALANX

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Stamina, Dexterity), Olympian

Prerequisites: Stamina ••••, Dexterity •••

In battle, one Olympian is worth 100 warriors.

System: When you make a reflexive Defense action, spend Inspiration to make a Full Defense instead. This does not consume the character's action.

PANKRATION: AN EPIC TOLD IN LEFTS AND RIGHTS

Keywords: Constant, Attribute (Might), Olympian

Prerequisites: Might ••••, Pankratiast

Pankration, as practiced by the Olympians, makes clear the meaning of Pan (all) and Kratos (Strength), as they deliver all the force their opponent can handle and then some.

System: When using the Shove Stunt, the Olympian pushes back targets a number of meters equal to three times their Might. In addition, the character's bare hands gain the Brutal, Pushing, and Piercing tags.

RUN LIKE THE WIND (P. XX)

WINGS OF THE WINDS

Keywords: Constant, Attribute (Dexterity), Olympian, Transformation

Prerequisites: Dexterity •••

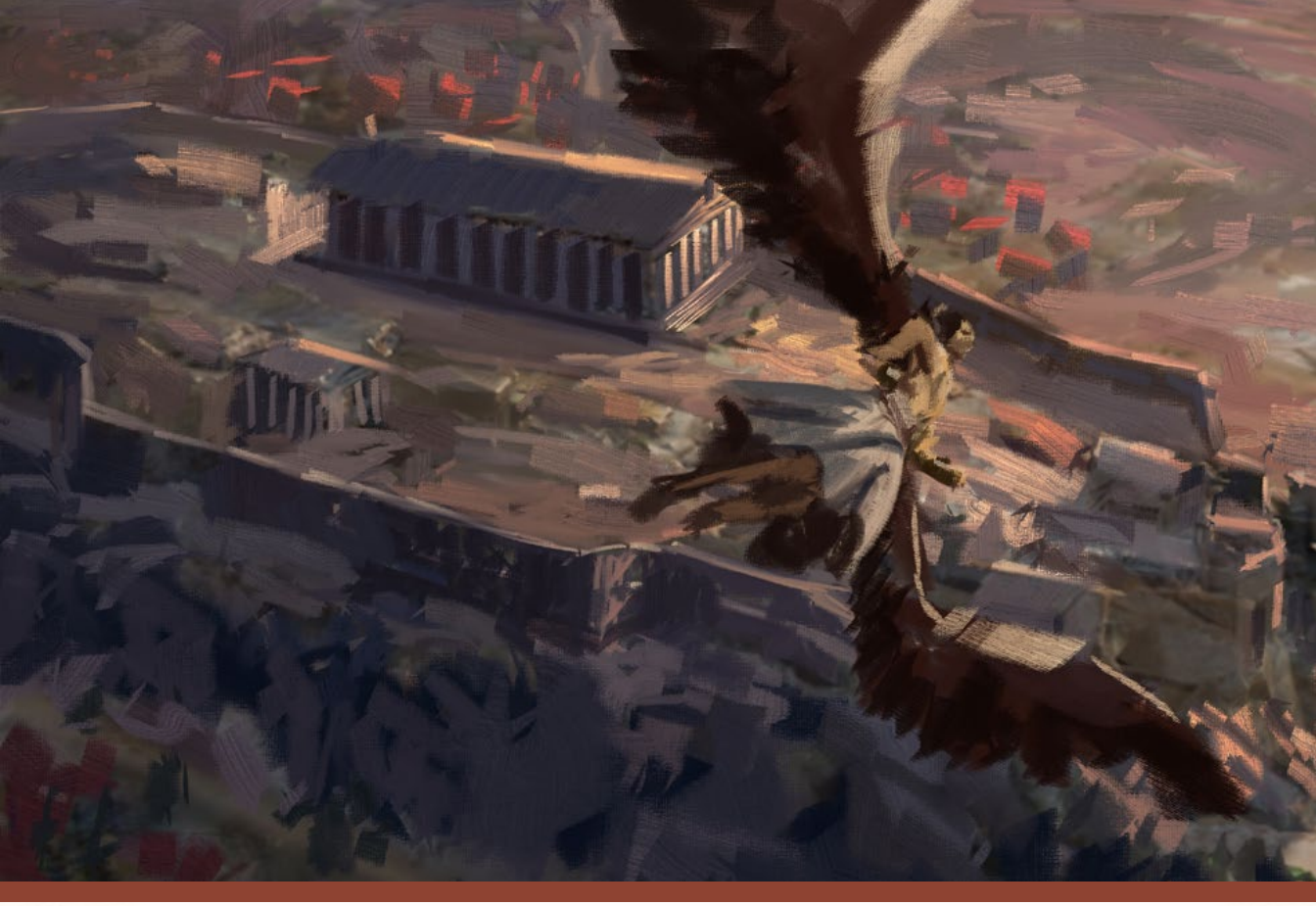
Like the four winds and their children, the Olympian possesses the freedom of the air.

System: Your character has a pair of large wings in addition to her arms. Bird wings are the most common, but your character could have wings like a vast bat or a scaly dragon. Your character can fly and glide, but only if she has sufficient room to extend her wings. Her wingspan is between four and six meters. Your character flies at Speed Scale 2, and the Swift Edge also increases her flying speed.

WRATH OF OLYMPUS

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Dexterity), Olympian

Prerequisites: Dexterity •••, Taste of Empyrean Essence



The essence that lives within the Olympian grows and stirs at their command, allowing them to throw bolts of lightning, emit cones of cold, or evoke balls of flame.

System: Spend 1 Inspiration to launch a bolt of elemental energy as a ranged attack. The dice pool for the attack is Aim + Dexterity. The attacker may purchase the Inflict Damage, Pin, and Critical Stunts as though it were a shoot attack. They may also purchase the following Stunts:

Blinding: (Lighting, Sun, and Dark) as per **Trinity Continuum Core,** p. 104

Knockdown: (Waves, Sky, Stone) as per **Trinity Continuum Core,** p. 104

Shredding: (Winter and Flame) (1 success per point of armor) The attack destroys the target's soft armor, lowering its rating by 1 for each purchase.

STAMINA

ASTOMI APPETITE

Keywords: Constant, Attribute (Stamina), Olympian

Prerequisites: Stamina ••, Taste of Empyrean Essence

The astomi are a race of people said to have left the mortal realm long ago. The esoteric energies of planes outside mortal ken changed their bodies to allow them to subsist on the scent of flowers and apples instead of bread and water.

System: Olympians saturated with Empyrean Essence can learn to reinvigorate themselves through an equally esoteric activity. When taking this Gift, the player should decide what new activity they can perform in place of eating. This can be anything, but the Storyguide must agree. In addition to no longer needing to eat or drink, the character also gains a +1 Enhancement on all challenges to resist poison.

DEATH OF AGING

Keywords: Constant, Attribute (Stamina), Olympian

Prerequisites: Stamina ••••

The Titan Kronos commanded time, and now so does the Olympian.

System: The Olympian perfectly controls their age and may spend Inspiration to make themselves appear older or younger. The Olympian never suffers any penalty due to age.

DIONYSIAN HEALING

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Stamina), Olympian

Prerequisites: Stamina •••••

Greek Wine is said to give a man fresh strength when he is wearied, and the Olympian knows that this could not be truer, especially after a lengthy battle — or possibly even during said battle. The drink may not be ambrosia, but something about the grapes just seem to make everything better in the moment.

System: The Olympian may spend a point of Inspiration when they have wine to imbibe. Through the mind muddying properties of the drink, the Olympian finds a fresh reserve of strength for the remainder of the scene.

For the remainder of the scene, the Olympian may heal a total number of Injury Complications equal to her Stamina rating.

This does little for the injuries in the long run, as the injuries will reopen and become painful once more the once the scene is over. If the character's Health track is brought back down to Taken Out during the scene in which this Gift is active, the effects of this Gift end immediately and the Champion faces great danger as the injuries accumulate and cause great damage to her body.

DIVINE ENDURANCE

Keywords: Constant, Attribute (Stamina), Olympian

Prerequisites: Stamina •••

The Olympian can walk through fire or freezing cold unscathed.

System: Your character is extremely resistant to environmental conditions. She is immune to all sources of environmental damage with the continuous (hour) tag. In addition, your character is somewhat resistant to more intense forms of damage. Environmental damage with the continuous (minute) tag becomes continuous damage with the (hour) tag, and environmental damage with the continuous (round) tag becomes continuous damage with the (minute) tag, permitting your character to run into a burning building to look for survivors with little risk of the fire harming her. This resistance to damage also means your character suffers no discomfort from ordinary extreme weather, and can hike across a frigid glacier during a blizzard wearing nothing but a loin cloth as comfortably as she could enjoy a warm spring day.

FANTASTIC FORM (P. XX)

FREEDOM OF THE WAVES

Keywords: Constant, Attribute (Stamina), Olympian, Transformation

Ambrosia's mystical touch infused the blood of Poseidon into your character's veins.

System: Your character can both breathe and drink fresh and salt water, and moves at Speed Scale 2 when swimming. In addition, your character can use the Swift Edge or other powers to further increase her Speed Scale. Finally, your character often possess some mark of her aquatic prowess, like webbed hands or feet, sea green hair, or similar features that reveal your character's connection to the seas.

HYDRA REGENERATION

Keywords: Constant, Attribute (Stamina), Olympian

Prerequisites: Stamina ••••

Even the most grievous of wounds are nothing for those who have tasted heaven's bounty.

System: At the end of any scene in which the Olympian suffered an Injury Condition, the Olympian automatically downgrades one of her Injury Conditions. In addition, she may spend Inspiration to downgrade the same Condition twice or downgrade a second Injury Condition once. This is in addition to First Aid.

IMMORTAL COMBAT

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Stamina), Olympian

Prerequisites: Taste of Empyrean Essence

Combat between the Olympians, whether for sport or conquest, is a sight to behold, as they warp the essence of Gaia itself in their favor.

System: The Olympian devises a new method of mixing their martial prowess with their command over the elements. The Olympian gains all the abilities below for any Empyrean Essence that they possess. If they later gain another Empyrean Essence, they also gain the matching ability.

Lightspeed Approach: (Wind or Lightning) The Olympian gains +1 Speed Scale so long as they move in a straight line toward a target they can perceive as they are carried by the winds or transported by lightning. At the end of their movement, they may make a Close Combat attack. The attack gains a

+1 Enhancement for each range band they move through.

Final Embrace: (Winter or Darkness) The Olympian uses her control over shadows or ice to grasp his foe at a distance. The Olympian must spend Inspiration and make a Survival + Dexterity roll against a target. (This can be part of mixed action.) Success grapples the target with cloying shadow or ice, making them unable to move or defend against the Olympian's next attack. They can attempt to escape as though it was a standard grapple on the following action. Once the Olympian attacks them, the binding shatters.

Spark of Violence: (Fire or Sun) The Olympian may spend an Inspiration when they roll initiative. They may spend successes on their initiative roll to attack any target within range. Successes spent on attacking do not add to their initiative.

Earthshaker: (Water or Stone) The Olympian stomps the ground, cracking the stone or causing it to ripple like the ocean. Everyone within Close Range of the Olympian must make an Athletics + Dexterity or be knocked prone. They require successes equal to the Olympian's Might.

NEMEAN SKIN

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Stamina), Olympian

Prerequisites: Stamina •••

Man's skin is thin and brittle, while the skin of an Olympian is stronger than iron.

System: When struck with an attack, the Olympian can spend a point of Inspiration to increase the cost of purchasing the Inflict Damage and Critical Stunts for the purposes of a single attack. The Stunt cost increases by an amount equal to the Olympian's Stamina.

ONE-MAN PHALANX (P. XX)

PHYSICAL PERFECTION

Keywords: Constant, Attribute (Stamina), Olympian, Transformation

Prerequisites: Stamina •••

The Olympian heals swiftly and fully from any Injury.

System: Your character automatically downgrades his most severe Injury Condition every hour, and can even heal afflictions. He cumulatively reduces the Damage Rating of any disease, ingestible, or injectable source of harm within his body by one every hour. If this reduces its Damage Rating to zero, he has eliminated it from his system. As long as damage sources don't kill your character, he recovers and is fit and functional within a few days. This same ability greatly lengthens your character's lifespan, allowing him to live to be at least 200, with age only affecting him in your last few decades of life. Finally, your character lacks all scars, his teeth are always perfect, and as a result your character appears obviously healthier than almost everyone he meets.

PLATONIC IDEAL OF ____ (P. XX)

PROTEUS' GIFT

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Stamina), Olympian, Transformation

The Olympian has true control over her form, appearing in any shape that pleases her.

System: Your character can transform her body to appear to be any other person, or even a humanoid monster like the minotaur or a satyr. Your character can even change her Size, growing to almost three meters tall or shrinking down to the size of a Size 0 child. To use this ability, you roll your Intuitive Facet + Stamina and spend successes as indicated on the table below. All such changes you make last until you either sleep or choose to undo them, whichever comes first.

SUCCESSES	CHANGE
1	Change skin, hair or eye color, face shape, or other relatively minor features.
1	Moderate changes in height or weight that don't alter Size Scale
1	Change sexual characteristics
2	Change Size Scale by −1
3	Nonhuman features like horns, hooves, or other features, but your body plan is still humanoid
4	Precisely duplicate someone you have observed closely

TASTE OF EMPYREAN ESSENCE

Keywords: Constant, Attribute (Stamina), Olympian

Prerequisites: Stamina •••

Ambrosia is a wonderful thing; while it can change the form of man, it also is shaped by the world around

it. Consumption of ambrosia that has been subject to intense elemental power can imbue it with that essence, which is then passed on when the ambrosia passes betwixt the lips of a would-be Olympian.

System: The Olympian must choose an essence when they take this Gift. They gain the passive effect listed for that essence. This Gift can be taken multiple times, for a different essence each time.

- **Dark:** Ambrosia that never saw the light of day grants the Olympian the ability to blend into the shadows, granting them a +1 Enhancement on all attempts to hide.
- **Flame:** Flame-licked ambrosia is warm to the touch and grants warmth to its imbiber. Their hands gain the incendiary tag. They gain a +1 Enhancement when resisting damage from fire.
- **Lightning:** Ambrosia stricken by lightning retains its spark. Static seems to haunt the air around the hero. Their hands gain the Stun tag. They gain a +1 Enhancement when resisting damage from lightning.
- **Sky:** Ambrosia that never touched the earth grants the Olympian a +1 Enhancement to dodging attacks made at range. They suffer no penalty from strong winds.
- **Stone:** The pebbles and stones the ambrosia absorbed harden the Olympian's body. The Olympian gains a level of hard armor that stacks with other armor. If destroyed, it reasserts itself the following scene.
- **Sun:** Sunbaked ambrosia imbues the Olympian with its light. They may emit light from their skin and glow radiantly. This raises the room's light level and grants the Olympian a +1 Enhancement when giving a speech.
- **Waves:** The seawater imbues the Olympian with the ability to breathe water and a +1 Enhancement when escaping a grapple.
- **Winter:** Frozen ambrosia grants the Olympian's close combat attacks the Piercing tag as the creeping cold freezes their foes. They gain a +1 Enhancement when resisting damage from cold.

THANATOS GAMBIT

Keywords: Constant, Attribute (Stamina), Olympian

Prerequisites: Stamina •••••, Platonic Ideal of

Just as the Olympian is their chosen essence, so too is that essence the Olympian.

System: If the Olympian would be Taken Out within a place of power for their essence, they may draw breath once more. As consciousness escapes them, they may spend an Inspiration and roll Integrity + Stamina. With one success, the Olympian resists being Taken Out as essence surges through their body. With three successes, the Olympian falls only to rise again, with only their Bruised Condition boxes still full. Finally with five successes, the Olympian surges back to life fully healed. If the Olympian fails to gain any successes, then they are Taken Out as usual, but their body will be consumed by the element only to birth them forth again at the next sunrise, fully healed from their ordeal. An Olympian can only activate Thanatos Gambit once per story.

UNASSAILABLE DIVINITY

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Stamina), Olympian

Glorious energy swirls around the Olympian, striking down any who dare approach them.

System: Spend 1 Inspiration to surround your character with swirling energies of an element of your choice for the scene. Attacks against your character suffer their Destructive Facet in Complication. If not bought off or if the attack misses, attackers making Close Combat attacks without the Reach tag suffer an Injury Condition, while ranged attacks and those with Reach see their projectiles or weapons destroyed, and cannot buy the Critical Stunt.

A repurchase allows your character to spend an additional point of Inspiration to radiate killing energies more fiercely, inflicting 1 Contact Damage per round to any characters touching them (such as through a Close Combat attack or a grapple).

An Inspiration 5 repurchase allows your character to activate the base effect without spending Inspiration.

PRESENCE

BEYOND THE KEN OF MORTAL MINDS

Keywords: Constant, Attribute (Presence), Olympian

Prerequisites: Presence ••••

As the Olympian grows in strength and power, their form begins to twist and distort into a being more beautiful than mortal minds can comprehend.

System: The mere sight of the Olympian forces mortals to make an Integrity + Composure roll. If they gain 0 successes, they are left a quivering mess by the beauty of the Olympian. If they gain less than five successes, the Difficulty of all actions directed at the Olympian are increased by one. With five successes, the target can shrug the effect off. Once the Olympian gains this Gift, they may consciously suppress it and take a less beauteous form.

FALL AND PRAY

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Presence), Olympian

Prerequisites: Presence •••

The eyes are the gateways to the soul and a gateway that is often unguarded. Eye contact with an Olympian is enough to rend the will of man.

System: The Olympian stares into the eyes of her prey and fills them with existential dread at the mere thought that they could offend the personification of power standing before them. Activating this Gift requires a Command + Presence roll vs. a Difficulty of the target's Composure. For each success, the Olympian can ask one question of the target which it must answer truthfully. If the Olympian gains three or more successes the target will freely offer up whatever information they have that they believe is the most pertinent to the Olympian.

FANTASTIC FORM (P. XX)

EMPYREAN AURA

Keywords: Constant, Attribute (Manipulation, Presence), Olympian

Wisdom, Moderation, Beauty, Justice, and Courage are valued highly by the people of Greece. As the best among them, the Olympians are embodiments of these ideals.

System: The Olympian unconsciously constantly emits an aura of subtle suggestion. This Gift may be purchased up to five times, once for every adjective. The effects of each are detailed below.

Beauty: (Presence) The Olympian is seen as the most beautiful in the land. The Olympian gains a +1 Enhancement on rolls to persuade or lure a person.

Courage: (Presence) None question the bravery of the Olympian. They gain a +1 Enhancement to commanding troops in battle.

Justice: (Presence) The Olympian is seen as the pinnacle of judgment. Their words will be looked upon for proclaiming the punishments of others. They gain a +1 Enhancement on rolls to understand cultures.

Moderation: (Manipulation) The Olympian is seen as the pinnacle of self-control and honesty. None will doubt their words. The Olympian gains a +1 Enhancement on rolls to lie or deceive.

Wisdom: (Manipulation) The Olympian is seen as the wisest, and all will trust their strategies. The Olympian gains a +1 Enhancement on all rolls to organize people for a plan and for setting ambushes.

LEGENDARY FAMILIAR

Keywords: Constant, Attribute (Presence), Olympian

Prerequisites: Presence •••, Steed of the Elements

Olympian blood is life. While every Olympian can create a companion from their element, some form a special bond with their elemental steed allowing it to channel even more of its master's power.

System: This Gift upgrades its prerequisite. The familiar becomes fully sentient and capable of speech. When this Gift is chosen, the familiar gains a dice pool of 5 in the things that animal excels at. In addition, it gains two additional Condition boxes, allowing it to take two damage before dissipating. Lastly, it may choose another augment from the below list. If the familiar is Taken Out, it cannot reform until the following day.

- **Gigantas**: The familiar grows to legendary size. It gains +1 Power Scale.
- **Legion:** The familiar is formed of a swarm of smaller creatures such as a school of fish or small automata. It may fit through any space small enough for a mouse to enter.
- **Many Handed:** The familiar gains a +1 Enhancement when attacking two or more targets.
- **Nemean:** The familiar gains 2 hard armor that regenerates over the course of an hour.
- **Venomous:** On a successful attack, the familiar may purchase the following Stunt: Poison (1 success) The familiar injects its target with Cobra Venom **(Trinity Continuum Core,** p. 111)

PLATONIC IDEAL OF ____

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Presence, Stamina), Olympian, Transformation

Prerequisites: Stamina ••••, Presence ••••, Wrath of Olympus

The Olympian transcends the limits of their body. No longer do they channel their essence of choice; they simply are that thing.

System: A host of bodily changes accompany this Gift. Olympians with the essence of winter see their arms covered in ice and snow left in their wake, while those of lightning summon sparks as they walk and have their pupils replaced with striking bolts. The transformation is always dramatic and unique. This Gift can be purchased multiple times, for a different essence each time.

This Gift grants three effects. First, the Olympian no longer spends Inspiration to use Wrath of Olympus. Second, the Olympian is immune to damage based on their essence. Lastly, the Olympian gains immense control over the elemental essence around them. The Olympian can spend Inspiration and make a Command + Presence check to perform miraculous feats. The Storyguide is the final arbiter of what can and can't be done with this Gift, but guidelines for each are below. These are just examples and not the limits of the Gift. The first example listed should require 1 success, the second 3, and the third 5.

Dark: Lower the light level, cover an area in shadow, cause a localized eclipse.

Fire: Snuff a flame, start a bonfire, engulf a building in flame.

Lightning: Redirect storms, summon thunderstorms, target a specific place.

Sky: Change the direction of the wind, provide wind for a ship, start a tornado.

Stone: Split the earth, shape stone, cause earthquakes.

Sun: Increase the temperature, brighten an area, focus the light into a beam.

Waves: Control the tides, redirect the flow of a river, cause a tsunami.

Winter: Lower the Temperature, turn rain to ice or snow, make a blizzard.

STEED OF THE ELEMENTS

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Presence), Olympian

Prerequisites: Presence •••

Such is the power of an Olympian: they breathe life into the lifeless and bind it to their will.

System: Dripping their blood onto the ground or a symbolic representation of their element, the Olympian calls forth the element to serve her. The appearance of the steed can vary greatly, from liquid stallions to chariots forged of sunlight to wolves born of ice and snow. The steed summoned is always the same and tends to take on the personality of its master.

The steed grants its passenger a +1 Speed Scale. It has a dice pool of 5 for things that animals can be good at but is unsummoned if it takes an Injury. The Champion may select a single augment from the following list. More can be added to the steed by repurchasing the Gift.

- **Charging:** When attacking from its back with close combat, the steed grants the rider +1 Power Scale.
- **Competency:** Choose two Skills. The steed has a dice pool of 6 when using those Skills.
- **Diving:** The steed can move through the ocean floor, protecting itself and its rider from the oceanic environment.
- **Flight:** (Must have Leap) The steed may move through the sky.
- **Leap**: The Steed can cross chasms, pits, and the like. It gains +2 Power Scale for the purposes of jumping.
- **Water Walking:** The Steed moves across the water like land.

MANIPULATION

BAKKHEIA

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Manipulation), Olympian

Prerequisites: Manipulation ••••, Mists of the Bull

The mere presence of the Olympian can send her opponents into a frenzy where they are unable to determine reality from illusion.

System: Spend 2 Inspiration in order to affect a number of characters equal to the Olympian's Might rating within Medium Range. The affected characters' minds are muddied as reality and the will of the Olympian are blended before their very eyes. For the remainder of the scene, the Olympian may choose the targets for the affected characters' offensive actions. Any offensive actions made against a target not designated by the Olympian is taken with a +3 Difficulty.

The Olympian may spend an additional point of Inspiration to have the affected characters take an offensive action against others affected by this Gift.

FROM THE GRAPEVINE

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Manipulation), Olympian

Prerequisites: Manipulation ••

The ego of mortals can rival the gods' in its fragility yet is far easy to manipulate. An Olympian can shatter the ego and confidence of lesser beings with ease

System: The Olympian need only speak a word of doubt and degradation within Short Range to implant feelings of inadequacy in Minor Characters equal to her Manipulation rating. For the remainder of the scene the affected characters make all actions with a +1 Complication as their self-doubt creates a sort of self-fulfilling prophecy. If the affected characters don't buy off the Complication and fail a roll, treat the roll as a botch even if there are no 1s showing.

MISTS OF THE BULL

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Manipulation), Olympian

Prerequisites: Manipulation •••, From the Grapevine

Using her own blood, the Olympian can induce a frenzied madness in her opponents that makes them a danger to themselves and others.

System: The Olympian spends a point of Inspiration and bites their tongue to draw blood with the intention of spraying it in a fine mist at group of opponents in order to affect a number of characters equal to her Manipulation rating within a Short Range. The characters suffer a +3 Complication to all attack rolls; if they fail to buy it off, they're compelled to attack the closest character to them instead.

RESOLVE

STEALING FROM HADES

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Resolve), Olympian

Prerequisite: Resolve ••••

Even the psychopomps fear the might of Olympus.

System: Spend an Inspiration. The character touches the forehead of the recently deceased while threatening away any psychopomps coming to claim the soul.

The threat can be whispered or screamed, but it must be intense. The Olympian's force of will rushes into the person, restoring their body. This may also be used on an ally who has been Taken Out. They wake up coughing and retching with all their Condition boxes full, but alive.

AIM

THE DIVINE QUIVER

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Aim), Olympian

The Olympian's weapon is never far from her hand, appearing out of thin air the moment she needs it.

System: Regardless of whether your character uses a sling or bow, or are throwing javelins, daggers, or spears, he never runs out. When your character draws his bow, picks up his sling, or raises his arm to hurl a weapon like a javelin or dagger, a faintly glowing version of this weapon instantly appears. This glowing weapon continues to exist until a few seconds after striking its target, then it vanishes like mist in the morning. In addition to never needing to worry about running out of ammunition, the weapons created by this Gift are unusually sharp and accurate and gain +1 Enhancement over ordinary versions of this weapon.

PROJECTILE RAIN

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Aim), Olympian

Prerequisites: Aim ••

System: Your character's prowess with bows, javelins, and other missile weapons like thrown daggers is well beyond the abilities of any mortal, and on her own you can fill the sky with arrows. By spending a point of Inspiration, your character can throw multiple javelins at once, he can fire as many as four arrows at the same time and throw several daggers as one. Using this ability too often risks your character running out of ammunition, but until that happens, each time he uses this Gift, your character add +2 Enhancement to his attack. Alternatively, your character can instead forgo this Enhancement and instead use the same attack roll to attack two separate characters, as long as both targets are within Close Range of each other.

ATHLETICS

RUN LIKE THE WIND

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Athletics), Attribute (Dexterity), Olympian

Ambrosia enhances the Olympian's body, making him almost as fast as the god Hermes.

System: This Gift increases your character's Speed Scale by +1 for running. He treats difficult terrain as normal terrain and can ignore up to 2 Complication relating to uneven, unstable, or complicated terrain. In addition, you can purchase the Swift Edge (p. XX) or other powers to further increase your character's Speed Scale.Close Combat

MIGHTY CLEEVE

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Close Combat), Olympian

Prerequisites: Close Combat ••

The Olympian's blade is as strong as he is, cutting through enemies with ease.

System: When your character makes a Close Combat attack, he can release a small quantity of ambrosia so that it coats his weapon, rendering it sturdier, more durable, and able to easily pierce the hardest armor. This Gift allows your character to subtract your Destructive Facet from any soft armor the target possesses.

Your character can also use this Gift to cut through wooden or stone walls or pillars as easily as through sturdy bronze armor. Also, unless the armor is an Artifact, if your character does at least twice as much damage to his target than the armor has points of soft armor, then your character destroys the armor, and it falls off the target. This Gift can empower your character's fist as easily as a sword or a spear. Also, your character can use this Gift to carve openings and even doorways in walls, even if his only tool is this fist.

COMMAND

AN OLYMPIAN DRAMA

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Command, Integrity), Olympian

Prerequisites: Command ••••• or Integrity •••••

Stories are forged by an Olympian's deeds and works throughout the world. The Drama can take many forms and often fate can be cruel to the hero who has caught their focus. But just as often, the subject of these Dramas are remembered as demigods and masters of their domain.

System: Spend Inspiration equal to the character's Command or Integrity rating. You may choose to take on a Complication for all actions using that Skill equal to the Inspiration spent until a specified

trigger has been met (For example: "Until I come face to face with our great enemy," "Until the city is threatened with disaster," or "When an innocent's life is put in danger because of my deeds.")

Once the specified event has triggered, roll Skill + Might unimpeded by the Complication. For each success rolled, gain +1 Enhancement for the remainder of the scene.

Empathy

I Am Not Your Enemy!

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Empathy), Olympian

Prerequisites: Empathy ••••

The Olympians is known to be honorable and just. Be it in combat or in a clash of words, the Olympian can convince even the most stubborn of opponents to see reason in the hopes of solving things peacefully and without bloodshed.

System: If the Olympian has not yet taken a hostile action against an opponent this scene, her player may roll Empathy + Manipulation in order to convince the target to lay down their arms (or cease an argument) for a number of Rounds based on the successes using the chart below.

Successes	Rounds
1 - 2	+1
3 - 4	+2
5 - 6	+3
6 +	+4

The effects of this Gift immediately end if a hostile action is taken against the target.

Note: In combat, it is easy to determine what actions are hostile toward the target. In an argument or debate, it is less so. Storyguides should give a fair warning to the players if they are heading in a verbal direction that may be deemed hostile by the targeted character.

The Olympian may spend up to 3 Inspiration to gain an Enhancement equal to the Inspiration spent in order to convince the target to cease hostile action for the remainder of the Session using an Empathy + Manipulation roll.

Larceny

Become Invisible

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Larceny), Olympian

No one may lay eyes on the Olympian if she doesn't wish it so.

System: Spends a point of Inspiration. As long as the character avoids making noise and attempts to move in a stealthy fashion, she is invisible. This Gift does not hide any sounds your character makes and does not disguise her scent, but as long as she moves no faster than a walk, no one can see her. The Gift instantly ends if your character attacks anyone or makes a loud noise.

Pilot

One With Your Steed

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Pilot), Olympian

The Olympian's energy flows into her mount, making it capable of astounding feats.

System: Spend a point of Inspiration. The character unlocks a small amount of the ambrosia within herself and share it with her steed. Each time she uses this Gift, she can temporarily extend the effects of one Gift that normally only affects her steed. If the Gift has the Constant keyword, it affects the steed for the next scene, or until the character dismounts, whichever happens first. If your character must activate the Gift, she can simultaneously activate it for both herself and her steed, and only need spend a single point of Inspiration to activate both.

If the character lacks any applicable Gifts to share, she may instead coat her steed with a thin sheen of ambrosia that provides 2 points of soft armor for the scene.

Technology

Demiurgic Pretensions

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Technology), Olympian

Prerequisites: Inspiration •••••, Hephaestus's Measure, Olympic Largess, or Platonic Ideal of (Element)

The creation of true wonders tests even the divine, but the truly great begin to test even those limits.

System: When creating Super-Science items, your character may replace the requirement for exotic

materials by spending an Inspiration. If they have access to ambrosia, they may instead immediately remove an Obstacle.

An Inspiration 7 repurchase allows them to spend an additional Inspiration to immediately remove an additional Obstacle.

Oracle Gifts

Only Oracle characters may use the following Gifts.

Aptitude Gifts

Following are new Aptitude Gifts for Oracle characters.

Intellect

Split Paths

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Intellect), Oracle

Before the words are spoken the Oracle can sense their impact, flickering visions of futures where they are heeded vying with those where they are furiously ignored.

System: Before an attempt to convince another character of something, such as through Influence actions, your character may determine the results of success or failure, the Storyguide providing explicit consequences for each. For example: If the tyrant Creon is successfully swayed to aid your character in war, they see visions of his forces marching to help their cause, warriors armed with iron and armored in bronze in great numbers... against the vision of an annoyed Creon ordering your character and their friends exiled from his city for wasting his time. This power is free the first time it's used in a scene, and costs 1 Inspiration each additional time.

Universal Speech

Keywords: Constant, Attribute (Intellect), Oracle

Prerequisites: Intellect ••

Whether the tongue of dreams, the language of spirits, or the gift of speech from the gods, the Oracle understands all and is understood by all.

System: Your character understands and may be understood by all who they speak to in person as if they shared a native tongue. Eavesdroppers or spies without similar powers simply can't understand the Oracle's words.

If the character also possesses **Speech Without Words** (p. XX), they may connect all present with the gift of communication. All such characters can then understand and converse with each other freely, but do not gain the other benefits of this Gift, the Oracle can withdraw their blessing at will.

A repurchase allows your character to blight the speech of those present, transforming their voices into babbling unsounds or animal sounds, as they prefer. Spend an Inspiration and roll Intellect + Culture or Enigmas. Characters you afflict must succeed at opposed Empathy, Integrity, or appropriate antagonist pool rolls in order to successfully convey meaning or use teamwork; those that fail are stuck babbling or oinking for the rest of the scene.

Your Seven Day Forecast

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Intellect, Presence), Oracle

Prerequisite: Intellect •• or Presence ••

Farmers and kings alike seek the Oracle's aid to predict the weather. The Oracle's counsel is welcome whether to know when to plant seeds or when to march to war.

System: This Gift allows Oracles to predict the weather. By making an Enigmas + Intellect roll, the Oracle learns the weather conditions up to (Successes) in days.

Cunning

Casting a Distant Reflection

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Cunning), Oracle

Prerequisite: Visions of Distant Reflection

The Oracle looks into a mirror and converses with allies in far-off places.

System: Your character can only use this Gift once you have already used Visions of Distant Reflection to see and hear out of a distant reflective surface. When your character spends a point of Inspiration to use this Gift, not only can he see and hear as if he were in the exact location of the reflection he is looking out off, but your character's image also appears in this reflective surface and if your character speaks,

anyone near the reflection he is speaking out of can hear his words. Your character looks and sounds exactly as if he were present, and while he is obviously a reflection, your character's words are perfectly comprehensible. One or both mirrors can be moved while your character continues using this Gift, but this Gift ends instantly if either reflective surface is covered or rendered non-reflective.

COMMAND THE ANEMOI

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Cunning) Creation, Oracle

Prerequisite: Cunning ••••, Brewing Weather

This gift upgrades its prerequisite and allows the Oracle to command the weather to do as they please, seasons and trends be damned.

System: Spend an Inspiration to remove the limitation of this Gift's prerequisite. The Oracle can make snow in the desert of Aegyptus or a sunny day in the middle of a hurricane. An Oracle's player can spend a second Inspiration to create truly insane weather such as a rain of blood or frogs. The Storyguide is the final arbiter of what is possible and what isn't. The maximum conditions, Complications and damage ratings that can be inflicted by the prerequisite Gifts are all increased by one when used with this Gift.

Such weather lasts for an hour by default, but the Oracle can keep it going longer. However, they suffer an Injury Condition (Exhaustion) for each hour after the first. Exhaustion can fill any Condition box and increases the Difficulty of all physical actions by 1, 2, or 4 depending on which level of Injury it is.

DOOM FROM ON HIGH

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Cunning), Oracle

Prerequisites: Inspiration •••, Cunning ••

To anger an Oracle is to invite visions of wrath visited upon one's head, but few are prepared for how sudden their displeasure can manifest in searing doom or killing light from above.

System: Spend 1 Inspiration while your character forecasts death and ruin for a target they can perceive within Long range. Dire portents of swirling auroras, gathering clouds, and dancing sky-fires appear across the local sky. Next round on their action, your target is subjected to a sudden environmental hazard as the sky rains fire, lightning, or searing light upon them with a Damage Rating of your character's total successes. They may attempt to avoid it, their Athletics roll reducing the damage for each success rolled.

Repurchase at Inspiration 5 to target up to your character's Cunning in targets.

Repurchase at Inspiration 7 to allow a second point of Inspiration to be spent, increasing the Power Scale of this effect by +1.

VISIONS OF DISTANT REFLECTION

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Cunning), Oracle

Prerequisites: Cunning •••

Gazing into a mirror's depths, the Oracle can extend the reach of her sight and hearing.

System: Spend a point of Inspiration. Your character gazes into a reflective surface, like a polished bronze mirror or even the surface of a bowl of water or a still pond on a windless day. She can then see out of another reflective surface, anywhere in the world, as long as at some point in her past, the character must have both seen and had her image reflected in the surface she wishes to gaze out of. Both reflective surfaces must be at least as wide and tall as an adult's palm. Using this ability is simple: you gaze meditatively into the reflective surface and make an Enigmas + Intuitive Facet check.

It takes five minutes to focus your character's mind sufficiently well to use this Gift, but each success you roll reduces this time by one minute. If you roll five successes, she can instantly look out of the reflective surface she seeks. In all cases, your character can see and hear exactly as well as if she were standing where the reflective surface she was looking out of is located. She can see out of the object even if it's been moved, like a mirror brought to a different room. However, if it has been scratched or otherwise altered to render it non-reflective, or if it has been turned to a wall or draped with cloth, the character cannot see out of it.

COMPOSURE

CHARON, CARRY MY VOICE

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Composure), Oracle

Most see death as a one-way river. To the Oracle, death is an ocean.

System: The Oracle presses two coins into the forehead of a fresh corpse and spends an Inspiration. The corpse's eyes open wide, and black fluid pours

Spirits of the Dead

As a rule, dying is a traumatic experience, and whether it's the influence of Hades or just in the nature of death, the spirits of the departed tend to be irrational and full of envy for the living. Worse still, their fellow dead are filled with jealousy at even the briefest of reprieves. The dead always want to stay in the land of the living but want their fellows to stay trapped below. The land which they hail from determines a lot of their temperament. Souls from Elysium tend to be the calmest. Souls from Asphodel tend toward insane envy, and souls from Tartarus tend to be the foulest of them all. Calling on the dead too frequently results in the residents of Hades becoming cross with an Oracle and seeking to make the Oracle into their neighbor.

from them. The mouth moves, and the terrified ghost begins to speak. Being freshly dead, the ghost may not understand it's dead, but it will answer any questions the Oracle has in between bouts of complaining about the cold and dark of where they are. At the end of the scene, the coins melt into the corpse, and it is still again.

CHILDREN OF THE HYDRA'S TEETH (P. XX)

DIVINE POSSESSION

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Composure), Oracle

Prerequisites: Composure ••

The Oracle allows himself to be possessed by the will of the gods. In a trance, he relays their insights.

System: The Oracle spends an Inspiration to connect to divine energies surrounding him, learning about nearby threats or disturbances from the area's spirits and genius loci. This allows him to visualize a full map of the nearby terrain, the locations of nearby foes, and atmospheric conditions. The Oracle must relay this information to his comrades verbally. This may forewarn them of an ambush, give insight into local weather patterns, and more advantages at Storyguide's discretion.

NYX'S UNSEEN ROADS

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Composure), Oracle

Prerequisites: Composure ••, Inspiration •••

The Oracle dreams of where they must go, opening a path through darkness and night, and as they wake suddenly they are there. Those sleeping near such Oracles must become accustomed to sudden and strange mornings.

System: Spend 1 Inspiration when your character goes to sleep, and name a destination within ten kilometers. Roll Inspiration + Composure, against Difficulty 1 for locations your character knows intimately, Difficulty 2 for locations they know in passing, or Difficulty 3 for locations they know through close description or direction. When they wake, they and a small number of Inspired companions find themselves there and in at least momentary safety. On a failure, your character and their companions are either up to a kilometer off the mark or in immediate peril when they arrive.

An Inspiration 5 repurchase allows your character to spend an additional point of Inspiration and spend an action to fall into a waking dream, transporting themselves and their companions at the end of the next turn. While in waking dream, your character's Defense is reduced by 1 to a minimum of 0 and they suffer +1 Difficulty to any opposed rolls they may be forced to make.

PHOEBEAN REACH

Keywords: Constant, Attribute (Composure), Oracle

Prerequisites: Inspiration •••, Vision of Panoptes

As great Phoebus Apollo is first amongst oracular deities, the Oracle raises their stature to first amongst their fellows, their gaze piecing lesser visions and turning aside lesser powers.

System: Your character always knows when an Oracle Gift or similar power or phenomenon is used or occurs within their presence. A moment and a successful Enigma or Science check tells them its function or abilities. If targeted by a hostile Oracle Gift or similar power, your character may spend 1 Inspiration to make an opposed roll with Inspiration + Composure and +2 Enhancement, remaining unaffected by the power on a success.

An Inspiration 5 repurchase allows your character to reflexively use this power to defend a friendly character they can perceive.

An Inspiration 7 repurchase allows them to spend an additional Inspiration to use this power defensively against Olympian or similar powers.

Dexterity

Godly Aegis

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Dexterity), Oracle

Prerequisites: Shield of Ambrosia

The Oracle's Shield of Ambrosia glows impossibly bright, protecting those within from all harm.

System: This Gift upgrades its prerequisite, replacing its effects. The Shield of Ambrosia grants the target full cover **(Trinity,** p. 106). This barrier must be sustained by the Oracle each round with a simple action. The Shield of Ambrosia can only be used in this manner once per session. Alternatively, it may be used to defend the target against an extremely lethal environmental danger, such as a collapsing building or a volcanic eruption.

Levitation

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Dexterity), Oracle

Prerequisites: Dexterity ••

The Oracle may float in the air, ignoring the earth's pull, or impart such a gift to another.

System: The Oracle spends an Inspiration, allowing her to levitate for the scene. In the air, she can arrest her momentum and remain stationary, but she may adjust her personal gravity as a reflexive action to float and avoid up to +3 Complication from complicated terrain or Field Complications she can easily avoid. She may traverse barriers without a roll if levitating would allow her to do so, and she may reflexively rise from prone. This does not allow her true flight; she can hover no higher than Short Range from the ground. Alternatively, she may apply this effect to another willing subject. If she does so, the Oracle remains in control of the target's trajectory.

The Shield of Ambrosia

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Dexterity), Oracle

Calling a shield from the air itself, the Oracle defends her charges against a rain of arrows.

System: Your character can block or at least slow arrows, sling stones, javelins, and other ranged attacks aimed at her and her comrades. Spends a point of Inspiration. The character conjures a transparent but faintly shimmering shield that blocks all ranged weapons aimed at her or anyone standing within five meters. This shield increases the Difficulty of all such attacks by +2 and remains active for a number of rounds equal to her Destructive Facet rating. This shield will even block siege weapons like ballista.

Stamina

The Food of Transformation

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Stamina), Oracle, Creation

It's unwise to eat when you don't know where your food came from.

System: Your character creates a simple meal, like bread and meat or cheese, or even just some simple broth, and infuses it with ambrosia by spending a point of Inspiration. Your character can create sufficient food to transform a number of individuals equal to three times her Destructive Facet. Everyone who consumes this food must make an Integrity + Stamina check with a Difficulty of 3. Any who fail this roll feel their bodies warp and twist to become an animal, while those who succeed feel their bodies begin to alter, but are able to hold their original shape.

Your character must select the animal this Gift changes people into when you create the food, and can choose a different animal each time. Also, this Gift can only transform people into ordinary animals with the same Size Scale as the person, such as pigs, large dogs, or small ponies. Regardless of the animal, anyone transformed loses the ability to speak or manipulate objects with their hands. If Inspired characters fail the roll, this transformation lasts for half a day, but ordinary mortals remain transformed until you, or someone else who can use this Gift restores them to their original form.

Hermes' Cloak

Keywords: Constant, Attribute (Stamina), Oracle

Prerequisites: Stamina ••

Treading beneath the scorching sun atop the freezing tundra of northern extremes, the Oracle's form predicts and repels the insults of the elements, heat and frost alike harmless against them.

System: Your character is never hurt, hindered, or discomforted by mundane extremes of temperature or weather. They may spend 1 Inspiration to gain 2

Soft Armor against attacks created or based on heat, fire, cold, or similar abilities and reduce environmental damage from Gifts or anomalous powers from such sources by their Inspiration for the scene.

Repurchase at Inspiration 7; spending Inspiration now makes your character fully immune to such elemental attacks from characters with less Inspiration or Source, and allows them to roll off against characters with greater values with Survival or Athletics at +2 Enhancement.

PROTEUS' FLESH

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Stamina), Oracle

Prerequisites: Stamina ••

Shapes beyond human form make themselves known to the Oracle, who shifts their body in response, flesh moving freely and fluidly in ways that many observers might think is unearthly.

System: Spend 1 Inspiration for your character's flesh to become malleable and fluid for the scene. They become able to contort, compress, and flow their body without harm in impossible ways, such as sneaking through a fort by squeezing through cracks in its stones or hiding by rolling themselves up in a carpet. Gain +2 Enhancement to any actions that would benefit from such contortions. Attempts to grab or restrain your character automatically fail unless supported by Gifts or anomaly powers, in which case your character may always make an opposed roll benefiting from this Gift's Enhancement to escape.

A repurchase allows your character to reflexively flow away from danger, granting them +1 Defense and +1 Enhancement to all rolls to avoid physical danger while this power is active.

PRESENCE

CAPTIVATING DANCE

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Presence), Oracle

Prerequisites: Presence •••

Cavorting and contorting in sudden and alluring ways, the Oracle makes themselves impossible to ignore. They twist and turn, their body writhing, promising pleasure, wealth, glory, and even the power of Zeus himself so long as the watcher never lets their gaze falter.

System: The Oracle begins their dance with an Athletics + Presence action. Anyone who wishes to look away must match Oracle's successes on an Integrity + Composure action. Onlookers may attempt a new Integrity check every minute.

HYPNOS AVERTS HIS EYES

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Presence), Oracle

Prerequisites: Presence ••

Past regrets and half-sensed future catastrophes are mercifully locked behind the veil of dreams, until a wrathful Oracle confronts the unworthy with the very stuff of their nightmares.

System: Spend 1 Inspiration and choose a target that your character can directly perceive with their senses or remotely through Oracle Gifts. Roll Empathy or Enigmas opposed by the target's Integrity. On a success, their nightmares and other horrors from their unconscious mind plague them for the scene. All their actions suffer Complication equal to your character's Intuitive Facet. If not bought off, they must choose whether they forfeit their next action or suffer an Injury Condition as their mind torments them. A character may take an Integrity action with a Difficulty of your Inspiration to center themselves and resolve this effect early.

An Inspiration 5 repurchase allows your character to use this Gift once per scene without paying its Inspiration cost.

SIREN EMULATION PRACTICE

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Presence), Oracle

Prerequisites: Presence ••••, Captivating Dance

Just as sirens summon ships to smash against the shore, the Oracle may summon people to stray from their course. The Oracle may use her voice like a siren to draw others in, but she can also use a wave-like dance to make onlookers run to her, ignoring any peril in their path.

System: The Oracle can dance (Athletics + Presence) or sing (Persuasion + Presence) to draw people to her location. She may dance silently and can move further and further away while her victims chase her. If singing, she may use the target's name in the song, rendering it effective against only a single target. People affected will follow the Oracle wherever she goes before dropping to their knees for her. Resisting the siren's pull requires an Integrity + Composure roll with Difficulty equal to the Oracle's successes. If being lured into a trap or over a

dangerous Obstacle, the target gets a + Enhancement to their action.

YOUR SEVEN DAY FORECAST (P. XX)

MANIPULATION

CHILDREN OF THE HYDRA'S TEETH

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Manipulation, Composure), Oracle, Creation

Prerequisites: Manipulation ••••, Composure ••••, and Reversing the River Styx

Vile and despicable, the Oracle can offer the spirits of Tartarus a bargain they cannot refuse, the chance to cause pain and misery once again.

System: The Oracle must take five teeth — tradition says they must be Hydra's teeth, but in truth, any teeth will do — and spread them on the ground in front of her before spending an Inspiration and calling forth the damned inhabitants of Tartarus with a Persuasion + Manipulation action. In moments, skeletal hands reach up from the earth; one skeleton pulls itself forth for every success. The skeletons are under the Oracle's control unless she loses consciousness or sight of them. They act on the Oracle's Initiative as a single mob and have a dice pool for all combat actions, equal to (number of skeletons summoned.) They can perform simple tasks but are too dumb and disobedient to do anything complex. The only combat Stunt they can purchase is Inflict Damage. Like the prerequisite, failing to return the souls to Hades is a poor plan, and the prisoners of Tartarus will flee if the Oracle's attention wavers for even a moment. They operate under mob rules.

DREAMWALKING

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Manipulation), Oracle

Some priests, mystics, and sorcerers claim to understand the hidden meanings in dreams, but an Oracle's power runs deeper.

System: If he knows someone at least casually, or if your character has some item that the person normally carries with them, like clothing or jewelry, he can contact this person when they are dreaming. To use this power, he merely needs to lie down and spend a point of Inspiration. The character enters a trance where he thinks about the person or holds the object associated with them in his hands. Doing so yields the following:

- Your character can instantly tell if their target is sleeping or not.
- Regardless of whether they are or not, he can send them a dream. Your character can make this dream seem exceptionally real and vividly memorable, so that if they have any idea that such a thing is possible, the recipient knows that the dream is a message from your character. If the person is not asleep, they have this dream as soon as they do fall asleep.
- If desired, he could instead make the dream seem like a message from someone else, if he knows this other person well enough to impersonate them.
- Alternatively, your character can craft a dream filled with numinous meaning and vague imagery so that it appears that the person has had some sort of divine message or vision.
- If the person is asleep when your character attempts to dreamwalk, your character also has the option of simply observing their dreams. Doing this usually reveals any conflicts, fears, or worries the individual is having and may give hints as to their attitudes about various people and what their plans are.
- With a single use of this ability, your character can watch someone's dreams and then send them a dream.

This Gift may be resisted with a Clash of Wills

ECHOING DISCORD

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Manipulation), Oracle

Prerequisites: Manipulation •••,

Language is a powerful tool that a person doesn't know how much they will miss until it's gone.

System: The Oracle stares into the eyes of a target and makes a Command + Manipulation roll opposed by the target's Integrity + Composure. Success curses the target to be unable to be understood by anyone other than the Oracle for a number of days equal to the Oracle's successes. They speak, and sound comes out, but listeners only hear them repeat the last thing said by someone unaffected.

EMPYREAN AURA (P. XX)

EREBUS BOXING

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Manipulation), Oracle

Prerequisites: Manipulation ••••

In gyms throughout Greece, boxers and wrestlers spend hours upon hours practicing with their own shadows. Why then are they so confused when their shadow fights back?

System: With this Gift, the Oracle speaks and takes hold of a target's shadow, using it to destroy its creator. The Oracle must make a Command + Manipulation roll against a target and gain successes equal to the target's Resolve. If successful, the target takes an Injury, as their shadow rips itself free and takes form in front of them, stunning them for one round.

On subsequent turns, the Oracle can spend their turn using the shadow to make Close Combat attacks, using their Manipulation. Alternatively, they may banish the shadow to Erebus, inflicting an Injury Condition on the target. The Injury Condition, called "Trapped in Erebus," increases the Difficulty of all mental and social rolls as the character is linked to their shadow and is constantly distracted by the overwhelming nothingness their shadow is experiencing. This Injury can be placed in any Injury box. An Oracle cannot use this Gift on a target already missing its shadow.

Since the Condition can be placed in any box, the severity of the penalty increases to match the box it is placed in (+1 for Bruised, +2 for Injured, +4 for Maimed.)

GORGON'S GAZE

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Manipulation), Oracle

Prerequisites: Manipulation ••

The Oracle can borrow the gaze of the Gorgons for a moment to make their steely gaze into one of stone.

System: By spending Inspiration and locking eyes with their prey, the Oracle can paralyze them. Make a Presence + Manipulation check against a Difficulty of the target's Composure or Desperation Pool. If successful, the target is petrified for a number of rounds equal to successes. If the Oracle has double the successes of the Difficulty, then the petrification lasts for hours. If the Oracle triples the Difficulty, then the petrification is permanent. Inspired individuals can spend Inspiration to make an Athletics + Might check to burst free on their action.

MANY-FACED TRUTH

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Manipulation), Oracle

Prerequisites: Inspiration: •••, Manipulation: •••

Truth goes beyond the flesh, but the Oracle can make meat match meaning, allowing fate to reshape their body or intentionally shifting their human guise.

System: Your character may take on the appearance and physiological features of another person (though they keep their own Attributes). If they choose to allow fate (and the Storyguide) to pick the appearance of their new form, this costs nothing. Otherwise, spend 1 Inspiration. Sex, physical form, hair and eye color, height and weight, and any other elements of physical appearance and form may be changed, as long as they remain human. If trying to mimic another person, the Oracle must either have observed them with another Gift such as Vision of Panoptes (p. XX), or have seen them and succeeded on an Empathy or Larceny + Manipulation roll. This transformation last indefinitely; the Oracle may turn back by using this power again, at no cost.

THE MISTS OF SLEEP

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Manipulation), Oracle, Ambrosia

The Oracle insists that her companions — or her enemies — rest for just a little while.

System: By spending a point of Inspiration, your character conjures a faint ambrosia infused mist that causes sleep. This mist has no effect on anyone in combat, a heated argument, dealing with any sort of emergency, or in any tense situation that could easily become violent. The mist is visible in bright light, but not in shadows or dim light. The Oracle herself is immune to the Gift's effects. She can use this mist on targets up to Medium Range, and can use it to affect everyone within Short Range.

Anyone affected must make an Integrity + Stamina check with a Difficulty of 2. Failure means that the target falls asleep over the next minute, while success causes them to be a bit drowsy and distracted, but still very much awake. Subjects sleep for up to an hour or until awakened. Harming or roughly handling anyone put to sleep by this Gift instantly awakens them.

ONEIROMANCY

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Manipulation), Oracle

Prerequisites: Manipulation •••, Charon Carry my Voice.

Spirits of the dead can be asked to haunt the dreams of the living.

System: The Oracle stands ankle-deep in moving water and speaks the names of the dead. The water carries the words through the gates of Hades and pulls back with them spirits long departed. The Oracle must hand an item belonging to the target over to the spirit and give it a command. The Oracle makes a Persuasion + Manipulation, vs. the target's Integrity + Composure. Successes can be spent on the following Stunts

Inception: (1 success) The Spirits intercept the target's dreams, giving them a message. The Oracle can determine who the message appears to come from.

Nightmare: (1 Success) The target's sleep is disrupted, imposing a +1 Difficulty against all actions until they get a whole night's sleep.

Coerce: (Successes equal to target's Composure) The target feels compelled to perform a specific action detailed by the Oracle. This can't make a character harm someone they love, actively cause themselves harm, or perform a task they find reprehensible, but it can make them agree to see someone, support a law, etc.

REVERSING THE RIVER STYX

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Manipulation), Oracle

Prerequisites: Manipulation •••, Charon Carry my Voice.

Cerberus is a strict warden, but Oracles know what to say to get a few souls on loan.

System: The Oracle must sacrifice either gold or an animal into a water source and name the type of spirit she wishes to summon. Each realm houses a different type of spirit, which has a different effect when pulled into the mortal realm. When the Oracle finishes with the spirit, she must return it to Hades, which can be easily done with a word and a touch, unless the Oracle is unconscious. If a spirit gets away, it is on the Oracle to hunt them down... or take their place. All uses of this Gift require a Persuasion + Manipulation and require an Inspiration. *Elysium, The Honored Dead:* The Oracle summons a great hero of old to possess a willing subject, often the Oracle themselves. The possessed may substitute the Oracle's roll for any Skill rating (up to a max of 5) and ignore penalties from injuries equal to successes. Elysian spirits are the most well-behaved spirits. They often await the Oracle to pick them up at a local bar if they escape.

Asphodel, The Weeping Dead: The Oracle summons the dead from the Asphodel meadows. These are those souls who lived unspectacular lives. They are happy just to get another chance to be among the living. The Oracle can send the weeping dead to scout, observe or follow the living invisibly. When summoned, the Storyguide should roll five dice in secret. If the Storyguide gets more successes than the Oracle did, the souls will go rogue to frolic among the living once more.

Tartarus, The Wicked Dead: The wicked dead take form and throw themselves at a target in a mass of blackened skeletal figures. The Oracle's roll counts as an attack roll against the target. She must spend successes to grapple first, as the dead will always try and hold the target down to pull their mouth open so they might crawl inside and possess them but will always be pulled out by their jealous fellows. Extra successes can be spent on other Stunts. The spirits will maintain or reestablish their grapple every turn until banished, using the original roll. If they escape, the spirits of Tartarus become a blight on the land, attacking the weak and the helpless.

SKELETON CREW

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Manipulation), Oracle

Prerequisites: Manipulation •••, Reversing the River Styx

Spirits lingering in the fields of Asphodel are eager for even just one more taste of life, even if that taste will be a brief stint of manual labor.

System: The Oracle casts shards of bone and teeth into the earth and chants over them. Minutes later, skeletons crawl forth, ready to serve the Oracle's command. Unlike skeletons from Tartarus, these spirits from Asphodel are relatively well behaved but ill-suited to conflict. They stay active for as long as the Oracle wishes and increase the Oracle, or a companion's Scale by +1 for any task where a group of unskilled laborers would be of use, such as creating buildings, rowing ships, digging ditches, or searching a battlefield.

The revenants this Gift creates are simply not smart or dexterous enough to perform any sort of delicate or precision work. Also, these creatures do not have Health boxes; whenever they are successfully damaged, they are Taken Out. These creatures can wear armor and use weapons normally. If not destroyed, all revenants created by this Gift collapse into rot or dust, depending on if they are corpses or skeletons, after one full day.

Dragon Tooth Revenants
Primary Pool: 6 (Stated purpose)
Secondary Pool: 3 (Obeying orders, performing simple tasks)
Desperation Pool: 1
Defense: 3

SPEECH WITHOUT WORDS

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Manipulation) or Skill (Culture), Universal

Prerequisites: Culture ••• for Oracles and Champions, Manipulation ••• for Olympians

Ambrosia gives one access to the voice of the gods, a voice that needs no sound or shared frame of reference to carry.

System: After a successful Persuasion + Manipulation roll, your character may converse with another character as if they had a shared language. The number of successes determines the degree of precision with which they can communicate. One success allows simple concepts like directions and landmarks to be understood. Three successes allow the transfer of complex ideas like social taboos, religions, and tactics.

Variations: When a Champion uses this Gift, it looks like a series of wild hand gestures and simple words as they create a pidgin-esque language to communicate with their new friend. Once used, they may retain that pidgin language for use with others who speak the same language. Oracles create a mental link between themselves and their target, allowing concepts to be communicated near instantaneously. Olympians speak with such conviction and will that their words are understood as they speak to them. With five successes, they cause a target to learn their language instantly.

THE VAPOR OF PSYCHE

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Manipulation), Oracle, Creation

Through smoke and enticing scents, the Oracle instills those present with a sense of camaraderie or enmity.

System: Spend a point of Inspiration. Your character spends a few minutes brewing tea, burning incense, or even just boiling a pot of scented water and infusing a tiny quantity of ambrosia in it. The vapor from this boiling liquid affects all who breathe it in, altering the Atmosphere by up to 2 in either direction, making everyone present notably more friendly

or antagonistic toward their fellows. The character also has the option of not allowing this vapor to affect her, though it may if she wishes. She can also infuse tiny amounts of ambrosia into small amounts of food or drink that renders any who consume it immune to others' attempts to alter the Atmosphere. The vapor affects every unprotected person in one large room, and also works outdoors if there is little or no wind, but outdoors this Gift only affects people within Short Range of the source of the vapor. The effects of this vapor last for a scene and automatically affect everyone who breathes it and is not protected from its effects.

X-MARKS THE SPOT

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Manipulation), Oracle

Prerequisites: Manipulation •••••, Children of the Hydra's Teeth

Oracles who deal in death develop a relationship with the Gatekeeper of Hades. Those who develop a good rapport with Kerberos may call him in their time of need.

System: The Oracle spends an Inspiration and traces an X onto the breast of their target. Doing so is a stunt that requires three successes on a Close Combat attack. On the following round, the head of a truly massive canine erupts through a portal and snaps at the marked foe. After attacking, it retreats through the portal. Minor characters are consumed instantly. Kerberos is Scale 4 entity, and its attack has ten dice. If it kills a target, the body disintegrates leaving behind a black ash outline where they once stood. Kerberos will only answer an Oracle once per session.

AIM

SUMMON THE BOATMAN

Keywords: Momentary, Attribute (Composure), Oracle

Prerequisites: Composure •••, Charon Carry my Voice.

It is only a grand illusion that keeps mortals from noticing the ebb and flow of the fantastical. With the help of a psychopomp, the Oracle pierces this illusion.

System: The Oracle must stand in knee-deep water and speak the name of a psychopomp with whom she wishes to entreat. When the psychopomp shows up, the Oracle may name any place touched by ambrosia and pay the toll, usually a single Obol. The psychopomp will then lead the Oracle to the nearest opening to the realm they named. The journey will be the most direct but not free from danger. The psychopomps summoned take on the form of the Oracle's choosing.

CULTURE

CHIMERIC TONGUE

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Culture), Oracle

Prerequisites: Culture •••

The Oracle speaks not only the words of man but the words of walls, plants, and even the earth itself.

System: By spending one Inspiration and touching an inanimate object, the Oracle can gift it the power of speech for a scene. It speaks out loud in a language of the Oracle's choosing and will do its utmost to answer any questions asked of it. However, the things that matter to a man do not matter to a river, nor do they matter to a bush. Buildings are likely unable to distinguish between strangers and stones will be more interested in the pressure placed upon them by a foot than in the hair color of a person who trod over them.

Within an Inspiration five repurchase, the Oracle can perform a more extended version of this Gift that allows her to imbue sentience to a single object permanently. They can then educate the object normally if they wish. An Oracle may only imbue permanent sentience to an object on the full moon during a ritual that takes all night. Some do this to create silent spies or buildings where the walls have "ears."

SPEECH WITHOUT WORDS (P. XX)

VOICE OF THE GODS

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Culture), Oracle

Prerequisites: Culture ••••

It is well known that the gods speak through the Oracles when posed a question, and when that happens, it is a momentous occasion, to be sure, but sometimes the gods are uncooperative.

System: With this Gift, the Oracle makes a grand show of a proclamation. Winds whip at her feet; her eyes glow with an unearthly light, and her voice echoes as if the spirits speak through her. She gains +1 Scale on all social actions for the scene. Her Scale increases by an additional +1 if her target specifically asked her for a proclamation.

Empathy

Potion of Connection

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Empathy), Oracle, Creation

Prerequisites: Empathy ••

A drink from a friendly source puts a person at ease.

System: Your character can spend a point of Inspiration to infuse ambrosia in food or drink so that the result positively alters the target's Attitude toward your character, either reducing a negative Attitude or increasing a positive one. Each success on an Empathy + Presence roll positively alters the subject's Attitude toward your character by one point.

The Tragedy of an Oracle

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Empathy, Enigmas), Oracle

Prerequisites: Empathy ••••• or Enigmas •••••

The Oracle can see the strings of fate being manipulated and spun around all creatures great and small. Though her Prophecy can save some, she is not always inclined to assist those whose hubris would just lead them down yet another path to misery.

System: The Oracle chooses a target for the Gift**.** For the remainder of the session, any Dramatic Edits made by the Oracle are reduced in cost by 1 Inspiration when made to hinder the progress or negatively affect the specified target.

If the Target is within eyesight of the Oracle, she may roll Skill + Manipulation in order to impose an immediate Complication to the target equal to the number of successes rolled

For every point of Dramatic Edit made using this Gift, a point of Complication is added to a pool to be used by the Storyguide to affect the Oracle in a later scene.

Voice of the Wild

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Empathy), Oracle

Who knows their terrain better than the animals that live there? The Oracle coaxes information out of them as easily as she might ask another person on the road.

System: Your character can understand the tongue of all animals, from snakes to snails, and can talk to them so that animals can also understand her. Animals rarely know the secrets of the universe, but may know where fresh water is located or if they saw people traveling along a road, and roughly how many. In addition, they know the local plants, animals, and terrain exceptionally well and can provide 2 Enhancement to any roll to make use of any of these local features or knowledge.

Enigmas

The Creation of Monsters

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Enigmas, Science), Oracle, Ambrosia

Some mixture of chance and the will and determination of the individual both seem to be involved when a person is exposed to ambrosia, but the results are often far less controlled when one or more animals is exposed. The result can be anything from pathetic and twisted abominations that only survive for a few hours, to terrible monsters that terrorize or devour all they encounter.

System: Your character can control the results of exposing one or more animals to ambrosia. To use this Gift, your character needs either an ambrosia pool or a quantity of ambrosia gathered from one, and one or more animals that she is seeking to transform into a single creature. She can exactly determine what Gifts and other features the newly formed monster possesses, and can also use the ambrosia to affect its temperament.

In mechanical terms, your character spends a point of Inspiration, makes an Enigmas + Cunning action, adding her Intuitive Facet as an Enhancement. At this point, you can determine what tasks the monster's Primary and Secondary Pools govern; you can even give it tasks, like "Obeys your orders," to create an exceptionally obedient monster. You can also use this Gift to choose which Edges it possesses and its power level. It's almost impossible to make a tiny animal anything more than a Minor Threat, and large dangerous predators are likely at least Medium Threats even before the ambrosia alters them. You must spend successes from the Enigmas + Cunning roll to give the newly formed monster Edges, Gifts, and other abilities listed below. Creating a monster is not instantaneous, and typically requires at least fifteen minutes for the creature's body to fully reshape itself.

SUCCESS COST	TRANSFORMATION
1	One Gift
1	Two Dots of Edges
2	Increase Antagonist Power Level (see **Trinity Continuum Corebook**, p. 139) by one

IT HAS BEEN FORESEEN

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Enigmas), Oracle

Prerequisites: Enigmas ••

The gift of Prophecy is used by the Oracles in many ways that are cryptic and difficult to discern. Other times, Prophecy is simply used to determine the failure or success of an action.

System: Once per scene, the Oracle may roll Skill + Cunning as a reflexive action before a character makes a roll for their action. They may then impose an Enhancement or Complication based on the successes rolled using the chart below:

SUCCESSES	ENHANCEMENT/ COMPLICATION
1 - 2	+1
3 - 4	+2
5+	+3

MANTEIA

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Enigmas), Oracle

Prerequisites: Enigmas ••••

The Oracle compels the gods to reveal what will come to pass through ritual method. This capability (or the appearance of it) is what gives Oracles their fame.

System: Spend an Inspiration and perform a divinatory ritual, such as haruspicy, ornithomancy, cleromancy, augury, or others using whatever reagents are required. The player may ask the Storyguide a number of questions equal to the Oracle's Reflective Facet about upcoming events that will happen in this session or the next, though the answer may be unclear if the question is too specific. The character may discern the answers in the results of her divination or receives ecstatic visions upon the ritual's completion. Additionally, the player may reroll a number of dice up to their character's Reflective Facet for the rest of the story as long as they are tied in some way to one of the questions the character asked.

In **Aegis'** time period, divination is widely believed in, and an Oracle in possession of this Gift or who leads others to believe they are capable of divination may quickly gain acclaim for the uncanny accuracy of her predictions. Such Oracles are highly sought after as advisors for the decisions of the powerful.

For whatever reason, Olympians seem to defy the foresight of Oracles. If a question pertains to an Olympian, the visions the character receives are particularly enigmatic and difficult to understand, they may require interpretation using an Enigmas + Cunning action.

OVERTHROW THE GODS

Keywords: Momentary, Enigmas, Oracle

Prerequisites: Enigmas ••

The Oracle may bless a weapon with the secret that can slay gods and monsters.

System: The Oracle may spend an Inspiration to imbue a weapon with a quality that's anathema to the function of ambrosia. For the rest of the scene, attacks with a blessed weapon inflict grievous Injury Conditions to the Inspired and other characters with Source, reflecting damage to the exotic power in their systems. If the Complications resulting from such Injury Conditions are not bought off, the target loses a point of Inspiration or Source upon suffering Injury.

PHARMAKON

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Enigmas), Oracle

Prerequisites: Enigmas ••

The Oracle may declare their target a pharmakon, a scapegoat for their community's woes.

System: The Oracle takes an action to declare their target an inauspicious danger to the community. They then spend an Inspiration and take an Enigmas + Presence action against the target's Resolve. Success afflicts the target with the Pharmakon Condition. Among the local community, the victim suffers -1 Attitude, reflecting distrust and fear engendered by the Oracle's proclamation. The local community attempts to drive the target out into exile, possibly by force until the Condition is resolved. This Condition resolves either after a number of days equal to the Oracle's Destructive Facet or when the victim carries out a specific task as absolution, specified by the Oracle. If no such task is specified, the Condition only resolves after the allotted time. While the supernatural influence around the

target fades, feelings engendered while they were a pharmakon don't fade and may present a challenge in returning to the community.

SOUL OF THINGS

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Enigmas), Oracle

Prerequisites: Enigmas ••

The Oracle may sense the soul in objects, discerning momentous moments from their past.

System: While holding an object, take an Enigmas + Intellect action. Success grants the character an awareness of the people who have used the object most recently, and of the strongest context in which it was used. A warrior's spear may reveal the fear she felt in battle, a glimpse of her last combat, and a sense of her most fearsome opponent. Additional successes may reveal extra clues in the form of raw information that the Oracle may use further procedural actions to draw conclusions about.

INTEGRITY

BEHOLD THE SERPENT

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Integrity), Oracle

Prerequisites: Integrity ••

The Oracle sees through illusions of all kinds. Words meant to deceive turn to gibberish, disguises fall from the face of a deceiver, and illusions fade as quickly as the shifting winds.

System: Spend an Inspiration. The Oracle gains an Enhancement equal to her Integrity rating to see through deception and illusions.

The Oracle may spend an additional Inspiration to determine the nature of the deception (if it is an illusion she learns what ability was used, if it is a lie she determines the extent of the lie, if it is a disguise she gains the true identity of the individual, etc.)

An additional Inspiration expenditure causes the affected characters to receive a Complication equal to the Oracle's Destructive Facet for the remainder of the scene if they attempt to lie to the Oracle again.

MY WORDS ARE DIVINE

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Integrity, Persuasion), Oracle

Prerequisites: Integrity ••• or Persuasion •••

The Oracle's words are heeded by the wise, though they may often be cryptic and veiled in metaphor. She may be well aware of this, choosing her words in such a way that sees fate play out in her favor.

System: The Oracle may spend an Inspiration. For the remainder of the scene, she may speak in half-truths and dual meanings so that her prophecies cannot be detected as lies. Apply the Oracles Intuitive Facet in the attempt to steer listeners to a conclusion that is favorable for the Oracle. Apply a Complication equal to the Oracles Skill rating in order to see through the half-truths and deceit.

LARCENY

VEIL OF ILLUSION

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Larceny), Oracle

The Oracle can create illusions and phantasms. These illusions can move and look and sound perfectly realistic, but lack all physical substance. An illusory bridge looks completely real, but can't support any weight.

System: The maximum Size Scale of your illusion is equal to your character's Intuitive Facet, but she can easily make smaller illusions. Your character can use these illusions to conceal people or objects that are smaller than they are. In addition, your character can use this Gift to disguise a person or animal so that its appearance is quite different, making a tall Nubian woman appear to be a short pale skin red haired Celtic man, and can even disguise wagons or ships to appear to be different. In this case, the illusion moves with the target perfectly. However, if your character uses this Gift to disguise a target, she can only disguise a single subject, which includes all of its contents in the case of a wagon or a ship. Observers may roll Integrity + Cunning against a Difficulty equal to the Oracle's Inspiration to notice something "off" about the illusion, detecting it for what it is.

MEDICINE

APOLLO'S MERCY

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Medicine), Oracle

Prerequisites: Medicine ••

A soft touch brings relief, as the Oracle shares visions of health and recovery with those they treat, pain fleeing and wounds knitting as visions become reality.

System: Spend 1 Inspiration when tending to a character's wounds, rolling Inspiration + Medicine. On a success, the Injured character downgrades their worst wound immediately. This may be used during

First Aid to downgrade a successfully treated wound a second time. Otherwise, a given Injury Condition may only be treated in this way once per day.

Repurchase at Inspiration 5 to remove the once-per-day limitation on this power when treating characters who have been transformed by ambrosia.

THE HAND OF ASCLEPIUS

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Medicine), Oracle

Prerequisites: Medicine •••, and The Healing Division

The Oracle's skill at healing rival those of the gods themselves.

System: By spending a point of Inspiration, your character can do far more than simply heal injuries, she can also cure any disease, remove scars, and restore missing or damaged limbs, and fix any other long-term or inborn problems including hearing loss, blindness, paralysis, or any similar afflictions. Each point of Inspiration spent on this Gift entirely heals one disease, Injury, or other Condition . Note that before a character removes another player character's disability, the player should receive permission from the targeted character's player. Such an action must receive player buy-in.

In addition, if your character spends three Inspiration, rather than simply one, she can restore the dead to life. This is only possible if the individual has died within the current scene, longer ago than that and only the gods can intervene. Also, while healing is automatic, restoring the dead to life requires a Medicine + Cunning check with a Difficulty as follows. Anyone on whom your character regularly uses this Gift will live to an unusually long time and may even see a full century.

TIME SINCE DEATH	DIFFICULTY
Less than a minute	1
Less than 10 minutes	2
Less than 1 scene	3

THE HEALING DIVISION

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Medicine), Oracle

Prerequisites: Medicine ••, and Balm of Healing

Ambrosia is both a wondrous and a terrible substance. It can gift individuals with powers previously only known to the gods, but it can also warps and twist someone's body in terrible ways, blending humans and animals together or even transforming two or more people into ghastly creatures with multiple bodies or heads.

System: Normally, all such transformations are permanent and cannot be changed, but your character's mastery of using ambrosia for healing can work miracles. By spending a point of Inspiration and succeeding at a Medicine + Cunning check with a Difficulty of 3, your character can permanently remove the transformation in a fashion that's harmless to her patient. She could transform a centaur into a healthy person and an equally healthy horse, or turn a minotaur into a man and a bull. Your character can use this ability on both animals, monsters with animal intelligence, and on any intelligent individual who truly and sincerely wishes to be rid of their transformation. She cannot use this ability on any person or other intelligent being who does not wish to give up their transformation.

MOIRAI'S LITTLE HELPER

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Medicine), Oracle

Oracles know some certain elixirs, and plants open the mind to the divine and let the celestial ether run through them or at least make them feel that way.

System: The Oracle can derive a pill that, once taken, grants them a +2 Enhancement on a single Skill. However, it also applies a Condition "High" that applies a +1 Complication to all targeted actions not using the Skill being enhanced. If it is not bought off, the Storyguide may choose a new target for the action.

PERSUASION

MY WORDS ARE DIVINE (P. XX)

PILOT

SUMMON FORTH THE WATERS OF HADES

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Pilot), Oracle

Prerequisites: Pilot ••••

Five rivers run through Hades: Hatred (the Styx), Oblivion (Lethe), Woe (Acheron), Fire (Phlegethon), and Wailing (Cocytus). The relationship between waters is always fluid, and with a few words, the Oracle can grant any liquid the attributes of these great rivers.

System: The Oracle must spend an Inspiration and make a Pilot + Manipulation to summon forth the spiritual waters into her liquid of choice. Each success can transform up to 50 gallons of liquid. The Oracle

determines the effect of the water when they invoke the Gift. The Oracle may only attack those already standing in the water with the summoning roll.

On subsequent turns, the Oracle can manipulate the waters with rhythmic gestures to guide her makeshift rivers like snakes dancing in the air. Manipulating the waters uses the same roll as summoning them. Attacks with the waters can buy all Close Combat Stunts except Inflict Damage and critical. Each type of water also has its own Stunt, invoking the river's magical properties. When the Oracle learns this Gift, they learn to summon forth two of the rivers. Buying it a second time allows them to summon all the rivers.

- *Acheron: (3 successes)* The river of woe inflicts images of most profound regret upon its target. Images of the pain and suffering they have caused haunt them for the remainder of the scene, and they come to see any pain they suffer as deserved. Anyone attacking them may purchase the Inflict Damage Stunt an additional time, as though they were of a higher Scale for the remainder of the scene.

- *Cocytus: (3 successes)* The icy black waters of the wailing river pull all light and warmth from a target. The Cocytus snuffs out all flames. The Difficulty of activating any Gift is increased by one for the scene's duration, as the divine ichor seems to freeze in place. In addition, attacks with the Cocytus can purchase the Inflict Damage Stunt, as the icy shards in the black fluid are sharp enough to slice bronze.

- *Oblivion: (Variable successes)* The waters of oblivion strip from a character all they are. Their memories pulled away from them with the ebb and flow of the tide. Each success spent removes one hour from the target's memories. Five successes allow the Oracle to doctor their memory in any way they see fit to. Inspired individuals can spend Inspiration to recall the memories after a day has passed. The target may attempt a Clash of Wills to resist

- *Phlegethon: (2 successes)* The river of fire burns in a literal sense, unlike its sister rivers. Anyone afflicted is subjected to a level 3 (rounds) continuous damage effect as the flames sear their bodies. Water will not snuff the flames of the Phlegethon. A character can stamp out the flames with two successes on an Athletics roll to stop, drop, and roll; otherwise, the fire continues to burn until it is snuffed out or it consumes their body and soul.

- *Styx (variable successes):* The waters of hatred turn their foe into a wild beast. They see enemies all around them. The afflicted gains a Complication with a rating equal to successes on the Oracle's attack actions. If they fail to buy off the Complication, the Storyguide can choose a new target for all of the character's attacks.

SCIENCE

BREWING WEATHER

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Science), Oracle, Creation

He can brew up a storm in a pot.

System: Your character can make tea or simply boil herbs in a cauldron, and spend a point of Inspiration to infuse ambrosia into this brew in order to affect the weather. This Gift affects the weather for a radius of several miles, but your character does not gain precise control of the events. He could call or banish a thunderstorm, but could not cause lightning to strike particular locations. If they occur locally, she could even create a tornado or hurricane, but cannot direct them beyond determining the general direction in which the wind she summons blows or the approximate heading of a tornado.

The Oracle can only create weather that is at least minimally possible in the location he performs this Gift. She could cause a gentle rain in Aegyptus, despite the fact that it rarely rains, but could not brew up a blizzard there. Also, regardless of what weather conditions your character creates, she can only create the sorts of arctic cold or desert heat that actually causes damage if the weather is already at least moderate cold or hot.

Your character can remove up to 2 levels in Difficulty or a Condition of up to +3 by transforming bad weather to good. If she does the reverse, she can slow movement by making the affected region into Complicated or Difficult terrain with a maximum Difficulty increase of +2 and a maximum Complication of +3. Typical Complications include howling wind that makes other sounds difficult to hear, or icy weather that creates slippery terrain. If the weather is already hot or cold, she can create extreme heat or cold that has a Damage Rating of up to 2 and the continuous (hour) tag. Weather your character calls in this fashion requires up to a scene to arrive, and lasts for at least several hours, up to the rest of the day.

SURVIVAL

THE EPIC OF A CHAMPION (P. XX)

FINDING ACHERON

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Survival), Oracle

Prerequisite: Survival ••••

The Oracle has a gift for finding the uncanny pathways that lead to the Underworld. These subterranean rivers travel great distances underground, emerging somewhere convenient to the Oracle's plans.

System: Spend two Inspiration. The Oracle makes a Survival + Intellect action while aboard a seaworthy vessel to find a cavernous river along a coast or lakeshore. This subterranean river will allow the Oracle to traverse a number of miles equal to her Reflective Facet x 10 before disgorging her vessel along a similar shoreline or in a large underground cavern close to her destination.

The pathways located by this Gift are often anomalous in nature, disappearing or shifting to a different location in the weeks or months that follow. Others are more fixed, simply located with uncanny insight by the Oracle. Temporary pathways remain for a period of weeks or months equal to the Oracle's Inspiration and may be used by her enemies as well as allies.

PRESERVATION

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Survival), Oracle, Creation

Foresight leads the Oracle to prepare her myriad concoctions beforehand.

System: Normally, the food or drink needed for a Creation Gift must be prepared when a character uses the Gift, but this Gift allows an Oracle to prepare the food or drink in advance. Any Creation Gift used with pre-prepared food or drink only requires a round or two to perform, but food or drink prepared in this fashion only remains useful for one full day.

TECHNOLOGY

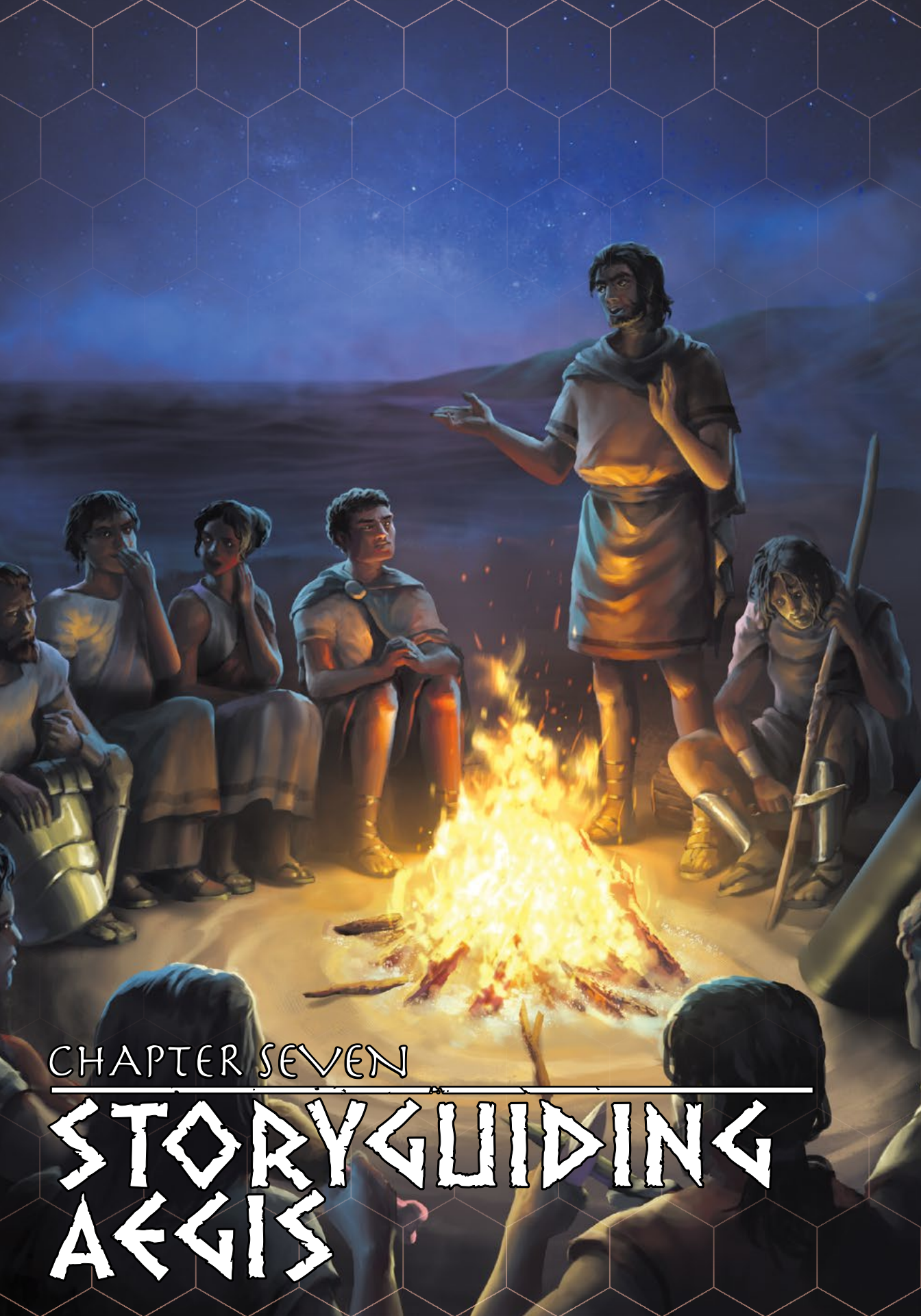
ATEMPORAL KNOWLEDGE

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Technology), Oracle, Creation

Ordinary mortals can draw upon their own experience and flashes of brilliance to create new inventions, but the Oracle can cast her psyche forward in time, drawing inspiration and understanding from the future.

System: Your character can use this Gift to obtain both the idea for and knowledge of how to create any invention created on Earth before the 19th century. All such inventions are perfectly ordinary creations that any mortal could build or use, but which are centuries, or perhaps even millennia ahead of their time. These inventions use the rules for Super-Science inventing, but you determine the Rank of the invention using the table below. One limitation is that some inventions require others as prerequisites. For example, to invent a printing press, your character would first need to invent paper, just as if someone wished to build a cannon, they would first need to invent gunpowder. However, few inventions require more than one or at most two prerequisites. Using this Gift requires you to spend a point of Inspiration, while your character enters a visionary trance that lasts one hour per Rank of invention she is seeking to learn how to create.

RANK	FUTURE ERA	EXAMPLES
1	Anytime in the Classical Era or Dark Ages	Ballista, catapults, crossbows, glass blowing, stirrups, trebuchets
2	The Middle Ages (800-1300)	Compasses, fireworks, gunpowder, simple gunpowder bombs, paper making, plate armor, Damascus steel
3	Renaissance 1300-1600	Printing press, cannon, matchlock firearms, compasses, improved sails and rigging of ships, telescopes, eyeglasses, mechanical clocks, and watches
4	Pre-Modern (1600-1800)	Blast furnaces for improved steel production, flat glass windows, microscopes, piston pumps, steam engines, wheellock and flintlock firearms



CHAPTER SEVEN

STORYGUIDING AEGIS

"You're never going to kill storytelling, because it's built in the human plan. We come with it."
— Margaret Atwood

The setting and structure of **Trinity Continuum: Aegis** lends itself to both very personal stories and sweeping epics. The best stories can even hit both. This chapter covers how to run a rewarding **Aegis** chronicle, from running a successful and productive Session Zero, setting up your safety tools and player expectations for your shared story, through methods of structuring sessions and chronicles, matters of game scope, all the way to how to include gods and magic in your chronicle, and how much.

We expect all the tools and conversations provided in this chapter to act as a jumping-off point for your own methods, preferences, and tools: this section contains very few absolute statements for a reason. Storyguides and players should take this chapter and use it to develop frameworks as unique as their chronicle, as singular as their group. Your table is *your* table; your chronicle is *your* chronicle. If the tools we present here don't work for your group, that's fine. We're simply providing ideas on where to start.

Ancient Stories, Modern Tales

Aegis as a setting and structure contains incredible potential to open up huge, epic stories which can span years of in-game (and real-life) time. By planning a little bit ahead of time and being open to change, adapt and adjust as stories, people, and intentions change, Storyguides can create lasting narratives with both sweeping arcs and small, intense interactions between characters.

The vast majority of this chapter is intended for Storyguides specifically, but we recommend all players read the advice included here; cooperative storytelling works best when everyone reads from the same page, both metaphorically and literally. Storyguides may find it much easier to discuss setup and boundaries with everyone once everyone has read this chapter, and players may feel more secure knowing that there's nothing in this chapter which they're not *supposed* to read. When players and Storyguide work together to create compelling narratives, there's no limit to the complexity and intensity of those stories.

Common Genres of Aegis Stories

Aegis stories can exist within many different genres; whatever you do with your chronicle going forward, defining its essential genre up front will permit you and your players to share expectations and build a collaborative story together. When planning your **Aegis** chronicle, consider the following non-exhaustive list of possibilities:

Adventure

By default, an **Aegis** game almost certainly contains elements of this genre. Whether your characters are weaving their way through a labyrinth and clinging to a thread metaphorically or literally, an adventure removes them from their everyday life, placing them in circumstances they never would have encountered save for the events of the story. Whether placed on their path by a series of unforeseen random events or

Open Doors, Open Discussions

Everything in this chapter is intended for all players, including the Storyguide, to read and use as you navigate telling cooperative stories together. An open-door policy for all things, including game policies themselves, helps all players have a good time at the table.

by divine intervention or anything between, adventure stories send them to places they've never been before, putting them into contact with strange and unusual people, situations, and events. Whether the character runs headlong into the adventure or finds themself coerced or forced into the story, they must eventually take control of the narrative and face facts before the facts face them instead. Characters in an adventure leap into action, whether that happens the first time the challenge is placed before them or the third. Some adventure stories have room for a reluctant hero, but most adventure stories work best when the characters have a solid motivation for engaging the events actively: adventure focuses on action, not reaction.

- A local leader displeases a god, having lost an important relic. The characters, tasked with retrieving the relic, must navigate a literal labyrinth to bring it home.
- Fallen from the sky, a strange mechanism literally lands in the lap of a character. What does this artifact do, and more importantly, what will happen if the people chasing them get their hands on it?
- Unknown forces have captured the sister of a player character. The characters must not only discover who has their sibling, but also the sinister motivations driving these forces, in order to bring her home.

DETECTIVE/MYSTERY

One might not immediately pick **Aegis** as a vehicle for detective stories, but humans have done wrong by other humans for the whole of history, and with the addition of superhuman powers, aliens, and valuable technology literally falling from the sky, there's plenty of grist for the detective mill. This genre revolves around some sort of criminal events, the collection of evidence, and the unraveling of a villain's plans to dramatic ends. Many historical mysteries and detective stories exist to provide a framework for **Aegis** detective tales. Within the framework of **Aegis**, a detective story likely features a powerful person attempting to preserve that power, or a desperate individual trying to gain power. Detective stories generally revolve around protection or acquisition of power, with the detective characters standing in as protectors of the powerless and vulnerable. Detective stories focus on facts, and on how those

facts can be manipulated by perception; they can also cross over with adventure when antagonists begin to directly act against the investigative forces.

Mystery stories overlap with detective stories, with subtle but crucial differences. In detective stories, the antagonist inevitably begins to act directly against the protagonists; they may try to directly harm them or act against witnesses or informants instead. Mystery also focuses more on the setting itself, focusing on the wonder and strangeness of that setting, where detective stories lean more heavily on the procedural aspects and the interpersonal elements of intrigue.

- The characters arrive at a temple of Aphrodite immediately in the wake of the priestess' mysterious death. As events unravel, they must race to find the perpetrator before the murderer frames them for this blasphemous act.

- A strange shape wanders the forest outside of Athens, glowing subtly. The characters suspect several conflicting groups of staging these sightings for multiple reasons, but could the shape truly be a god, or one of their servants, walking the earth?

FANTASY

Aegis provides a wonderful framework for telling fantasy stories. Oracular powers, strength granted by gods, and fantastic phenomena lend themselves to focusing on the supernatural elements of the **Aegis** world. The key to telling a fantastic story in **Aegis** is, of course, keeping the Trinity Continuum's science fiction underpinning.

- A strange crystal grows from the skin of residents of a small town shortly after a stone falls from the sky, breaking the statue of Hephaestus in the town's center. What has caused this bizarre malady?

- A traveling show claims to have captured both mermaids and unicorns, displaying them as they move from place to place. Are they real, or a fantastic conjuration of illusion, and what of the odd illness which follows the show as they travel?

ROMANCE

Romance as a genre focuses on interpersonal relationships primarily. While this genre does not generally form the backbone of **Aegis** stories, human interaction, including romance, provides strong drivers for these plots. The Siege of Troy is, at its heart, a story of love, loyalty, and romance. Well, sort of. Nobody asked Helen what she wanted.

Love, longing for family, and seeking the epic highs and lows of romance can provide more emotional meat to a chronicle, but as with all other genres upon which an **Aegis** game can focus, it should be discussed thoroughly with other players up front. Without buy-in from everybody, romance isn't romance, it's just stalking.

WAR

The epics of ancient Greece focus on war stories above most others, and even those stories which don't directly focus on war were informed by them, and by the martial culture of ancient Greece. Even in the story of Medea and Jason — not a war story per se — we see the ever-presence of soldiers and the idea that outsmarting soldiers or directing them was a necessary skill for a hero. A war story need not actively involve the war itself for war to play a large part in it; the conflict may have just ended, or may loom large, laying its shadow over everything the players do. Do the characters seek to avoid the fires of war or to stoke them? Or are they merely trying to survive?

- Recruited to the army to help a neighboring city-state, the characters begin to suspect that those fomenting the war do so for their own financial ends. They must take evidence of this to an important figure who can help them end the war before it begins.

- In the aftermath of a war, residents find strange mechanisms buried all over the former battlegrounds. What do they do, and why have the people who find them started disappearing?

DIALED-IN FOCUS

At all times, the characters remain the focus of the story — do not permit the gods to steal all the limelight or the glory, or to make all the decisions. The Trinity Continuum is, in the end, a story about humanity, not divinity. While **Aegis** exists in a world where literal gods can step into the frame at any moment and having them show up to rescue your players (or foil them!) may seem like a quick fix to any storytelling woe, be careful not to pull the focus away from the player characters. No one wants to show up to watch a play that the Storyguide puts on, no matter how good it is. Bringing in gods too often can pull the focus from the people the story is really about — the player characters.

Bringing in gods too often can inure the players to their presence. Treat bringing in divinity like adding hot sauce to a dish — too much cancels all out all other flavor, and after a while, it just doesn't seem special anymore.

SESSION ZERO

Begin as you intend to continue: if as a group you want to tell epic stories with amazing plot arcs which engage eternal human struggles, or if you want to play pew-pew shoot-em-up, everyone will have a much better time if you know that from the beginning. Neither approach has any objective value over the other, and either way is an equally valid way to play the game — or some mix of the two, or any other stories your table comes up with — that's fine, too. The only wrong way to play **Aegis** is without communicating with one another, especially about things as essential as "what kind of game are we playing together?"

Session Zero is the common name for the first "game" of a new chronicle. It usually contains little if any actual play time and should be undertaken to guarantee that all players (including the Storyguide) can create interlocking and compatible characters, communicate with each other about needs and desires, and lay a foundation together for an exciting, safe, and fun chronicle. Session Zero is a required part of **Aegis** play and planning, and while some people handle these steps in an asynchronous fashion — such as by intermittent discussion over a chat program or via email conversations — rather than gathering to hash things out live, we recommend sitting down together, whether at a physical table or a virtual one, to discuss what's important for you in your new **Aegis** chronicle.

SETTING UP FOR SUCCESS

A successful Session Zero makes it much more likely that your chronicle will gain steam rather than fizzle or die. Successful collaboration and management of both the Session Zero process and game structure going forward will help all players enjoy game time even more, looking forward to each session and talking about the game's events excitedly while packing up their kit at the end of game time. There's little better feeling as a Storyguide than hearing your players retell their favorite moments while putting away their dice, and this structure helps to guarantee you'll get those wonderful ego-boost moments of watching your players enjoy the stories you tell together.

Before Session Zero, the Storyguide should prepare or gather the following items:

Character sheets for all players

- A piece of paper or online text file labeled "Game Expectations"
- A piece of paper or online text file labeled "Themes"
- A piece of paper or online text file labeled "Lines & Veils"
- Sufficient pens/pencils for those who inevitably forget them

At the beginning of Session Zero, pass a blank character sheet to all players; the group will fill these out together as you work through your Session Zero, so don't start them now!

GAME EXPECTATIONS

Before you go one step further, decide together your expectations for play. Either place the piece of paper with the words "Game Expectations" at the top in the center of your table or distribute the link through your chat app. Give everyone a minute or two to think through what they expect from the game, and then start jotting down answers. Something as simple as "cellphone use at the table" can be a sticking point — it deeply irritates and distracts some people, while other people may use their phone to take notes or manage their ADHD — so deciding up front

JUST ANOTHER PLAYER

The Storyguide is a player, too, albeit one with extra responsibility. The Storyguide is not the absolute ruler of a table-sized kingdom but first among equals at a table full of people playing a game together. Any time we refer to "players" in this section, we explicitly include the Storyguide as one of those players.

what constitutes good manners for your table eliminates a lot of upset down the line.

Some people find it helpful to separate their expectations into positive expectations and negative expectations. That is, things you should affirmatively do and things you should not do. Others find it helpful to phrase everything as a positive expectation, since to them "arrive on time" feels better than "don't be late." Whatever works best for your group is absolutely fine — the point of this exercise is to create together the expectations for your table, so the only correct answers are those which help you get along better together and enjoy one another's time and company.

Common Game Expectations: be on time, assume best intentions in other people's speech and actions, provide content warnings as agreed, use cellphones at the table as agreed or step away to use them, don't interrupt others, allow others to control the movement or actions of their characters and don't act for them.

THEMES

From discussing expectations of behavior at the table, it's an easy transition into discussing the game you want to play. Nothing is more frustrating for all players, including the Storyguide, than players who aren't all on the same page regarding the type and timbre of game everyone's playing. Someone showing up to an epic game with big, sweeping vistas and large-scale battles but wanting to play a smaller, more intimate game which focuses on questions of humanity, divinity, and human dignity probably won't have that great of a time, and a Storyguide who wants to play a game of political influence and intrigue in Greek city-states will probably not enjoy storytelling for a player whose idea of savvy negotiations is a solid sock in the crotch to the leader of the other side.

A desire for different tones and themes of game doesn't doom a chronicle — don't worry if your group comes to the table with different ideas of what you'd like to do. The important thing is finding the things on which you all agree, rather than focusing on the places where you disagree about what's fun. If one player enjoys inserting cheeky modern references into the game or inserting the meme of the week into Storyguide character names, while another player finds that breaks immersion and it bums them out, that's okay. Compromise can look like the gaming equivalent of "only one Tori Amos song per hour, please" when sharing the car radio on a road trip, where the one who enjoys cheeky references promises a maximum of two references per session and the other agrees to put up with it for the enjoyment of others as long as the references are restrained to that maximum.

Compromise can also look like alternating sessions between those focused primarily on complicated puzzles which require a lot of player brainpower and sessions focused mostly on action, or combat, or intrigue. The point of these conversations is not to dictate what the game will look like, but to foster the communication which leads to everybody getting to enjoy the things they enjoy. Look at it like sharing a family-style meal at a restaurant: you might not get to cover the tabletop in dishes containing exactly what you like, but you should feel like there's plenty on the table which you can eat and which you enjoy eating.

Nothing in the preceding section should be taken as an explicit or implicit endorsement of the idea that players should be pressured to play out anything which triggers or upsets them, or which they do not enjoy. There's a difference between "this isn't my favorite thing, but I can enjoy it, or at least tolerate it because you like it, and I know that literally playing along with the things you like means that you'll play along with the things I like and aren't your favorite when it's my turn" and "this theme really upsets me, and I can't enjoy a session which contains it, but I have been shamed or manipulated into accepting that it'll happen at the table, or told that I'm a bad player if I don't go along with it." The former is fine, the latter should never, ever happen.

Place the piece of paper with "Themes" at the top on the center of the table or distribute the link to the file on your chat app and ask your players to write down what kind of themes they want to engage, and, on the back side, the themes they don't want to engage.

Common Desired Themes: Intrigue; large-scale warfare; questions of divinity; interpersonal and relationship conflict; travelogues.

Common Undesired Themes: Homophobia/transphobia/queerphobia, racism, antisemitism, fatphobia or other systemic biases; marital infidelity or being cheated on; conflicts with family of origin.

Undesired Themes can also easily become Lines or Veils (p. XX), so don't be surprised if you find overlap between these two lists, and don't discourage players from putting items on both lists. Lines and Veils commonly deal with triggers or other things which are "a hard no" for the players, while undesired themes simply help players to elaborate what they want instead; if you can say "I don't want attacks by chickens" in themes, you can probably

turn that into "I would prefer to deal with attacks from giant rabid bears."

It often assists people to think of movies, books or other media which match the theme and general vibe of the game they'd like to play, so if someone wants to write down "like Jurassic Park, but the dinosaurs are constructs instead," great! That's a wonderful way to explain the idea in a manner which will likely resonate well with other players.

These themes and desired activities may also vary depending on whether you're discussing Storyguide characters versus player characters. Someone may have no issue with (for example) family-of-origin drama when that drama provides a meaningful hook to another player character, but not enjoy that particular theme when dealing with Storyguide characters.

Likewise, players may not find physical violence or overt ideological conflict between player characters enjoyable and may wish to begin on the assumption that all player characters are on the same side, and avoid player-versus-player, or "PvP." This doesn't mean that players will all get along and skip through a field of daisies holding hands, but if the group decides they would prefer to avoid this particular vein of interaction, it does mean they should be ready to utilize safety tools to de-escalate situations, and that all players should negotiate outcomes in good faith. Nobody enjoys playing with someone who says "no drama" as a means of avoiding consequences for the actions of their characters. Discuss with an assumption that all other players are approaching negotiations in good faith, and if it turns out that someone's good faith isn't so good — well, that's an entirely different discussion.

None of this is to say that if players agree that they enjoy interpersonal conflict or any sort of PvP that these discussions are any less necessary. Conflict of any sort requires active discussion. If you don't leave the table liking your fellow players at least as much as you did when you sat down with them, whatever happened at the table, you didn't win.

By the end of this exercise, you should have a relatively solid idea, as a group, what kind of game you're playing, what flavor of story you wish to tell together, and should be ready to move on to engaging with setting up safety tools.

SAFETY TOOLS

The proliferation of safety tools within the RPG community enables easier communication about boundaries and allows for players to engage with difficult material in a consensual way. Look at them like a helmet and a safety harness, allowing for a rock climber to attempt a much more difficult face than she might ever free climb. No safety tool is required, and you may find that some, all, or none of these tools work best for your group.

LINES & VEILS

First appearing in Ron Edwards' *Sex and Sorcery* supplement for Sorcerer, Lines and Veils allow for a group to set boundaries around the material with which the group will engage. A Line is any story element with which the group simply will not engage in any fashion, either "on screen" (that is, played out at the table) or "off screen" (that is, occurring after a *fade to black*, as an element in a character's background or happening during downtime). A Veil, on the other hand, delineates a topic which may arise in downtime, as a background element, or which will trigger a fade to black, occurring "off-screen."

Prepare your document for Lines & Veils and discuss as a group the items to add. Treat this as a living

FADE TO BLACK

At no time should a player be forced to play out a scenario which makes them uncomfortable. This may mean that events unfold "off-screen," with negotiation occurring between all concerned parties, or it may simply mean the scene ends and you never speak of it again, but whatever it means, anyone can at any time call for a Fade to Black. This does mean that the scene ends immediately, and any fallout from that scene is handled separately. We don't mandate many things as far as safety is concerned, but this is one of them: if you push someone to play out any scenario which makes them uncomfortable, ***you are playing this game wrong.***

Never push anyone to explain their reasons for wanting to fade to black; you aren't entitled to an explanation if someone doesn't want to play out a particular scene.

document: anything can (and probably will) move from one category to another at any time during the chronicle. It's not uncommon for a player to realize that they really aren't okay with having something happen, even off-screen; likewise, a player might feel more comfortable with the group as time moves on and have a particular subject move from a Line to a Veil.

No one ever needs to justify why they want to include a particular item on the list of Lines or Veils. Ever.

- **Common Lines**: Sexual assault; bugs, including spiders and centipedes; homophobia, transphobia, ableism, racism; religious, medical, or domestic abuse; trypophobic imagery; starvation.
- **Common Veils**: Consensual sexual contact, family-of-origin conflict, religious content, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, racism; eating disorders; religious, medical, or domestic abuse; romantic content.

Collaborative Character Creation

While some tables prefer to make their characters on their own and bring them to the table, either after Session Zero or prior to it, Storypath games function best when players work on their characters collaboratively. Most discussions had during the above conversations, laying out the desired themes and boundaries of your collaborative story, will also lead to character thoughts and ideas, allowing for players to flesh out their characters in a way that lends itself well to constructing character Paths and backgrounds. If one player calls out an active desire for themes such as balancing the needs of found family and families of origin, for example, this may spark another player into creating a family tie which permits that tension to come into play later. See p. XX for further information on character creation and work this process into your Session Zero — you'll come out with a richer chronicle for working this all through together!

Story Structure

One of the most challenging aspects of Storyguiding comes down to structuring the story — how do you build the chronicle from beginning to end, and what should you address to get to each point? There are many ways to structure a chronicle. We'll cover a few options below.

Once you've decided together on the themes and things the table both wants to address and prefers to avoid, as well as putting together your characters, the Storyguide can take those ideas and throw them into the proverbial cauldron to stew into story ideas. Taking those ideas, and one of the below approaches, a hybrid of them, or some other option, the Storyguide starts to build a plan for the chronicle.

The three styles listed below are arranged by Storyguide experience level. Living World is best suited for more experienced Storyguides, with Three Acts (No Waiting) usually posing the easiest story structure for newer or less-experienced Storyguides to work with. This does not mean that if you're brand-new to Storypath or even to running roleplaying games, that you can't try to use some or all of the techniques in the "more advanced" styles. Please take from each section the pieces which work best for your unique Storyguiding style and for your group, your table, your chronicle. Adaptation and improvisation are a Storyguide's best friends (well, that and a few pre-written Storyguide character templates).

Areas of Action

After choosing which method of story structure to use, expand upon it further by exploring the Trinity Continuum's three areas of action: Action-adventure, Procedurals, and Intrigue. The exact balance of your chronicle between these three areas of action will vary depending on the composition of the group and your individual preferences. However, Storyguides will find it useful not only to discuss with players ahead of time which of the three areas of action they find most compelling (and least compelling!) but to examine the balance of these three areas over the course of a chronicle. If the group spends all of its time on procedurals, it may start to feel a little like a slog of endlessly digging for clues with no real payoff. Likewise, while many people enjoy action and adventure (it's one of the most frequently used stereotypes of roleplaying games for a reason), too many sessions of slashing and exploding through obstacles robs your players of the opportunity to exercise their brains and explore the subtlety and complexity of emotions and intrigue.

Try keeping a loose tally in whatever notebook or Storyguide document you use of how many scenes in a

session fall into each of the three areas of action. This should help you balance out the action and keep players engaged, as well as making certain that if you have one character built for swordplay and another one built for cloak and dagger intrigue, neither of them feels neglected or overshadowed.

None of this should be seen as encouraging tallying of that sort by players. That sort of thing leads to arguments over who got the most sequences set in their preferred area of action and to more hurt feelings than equitable balance of game play. If it becomes unbalanced, then yes, that's something to talk about with your Storyguide, but if last week's session had four scenes of intrigue and three action scenes, you didn't lose out if you're the action maven of your group — picking at threads like that doesn't make for an enjoyable evening for anybody.

THREE ACTS (NO WAITING)

The most structured and rigid of the three basic approaches to Storyguiding, the Three Acts approach follows a standard story structure as written in books and movies. In this approach, the Storyguide writes out an outline or sketch of the entire arc as intended from beginning to end and guides the players through pre-determined scenes or story beats.

It's important, when taking the Three Acts route, not to "railroad" your characters or players — most specifically, the players — into story points that don't make sense, whether that's because circumstances have changed, because a particular player cannot make it this week, or because the characters have taken actions which cause the planned plot point to no longer make sense. If the players can't affect the story and they're just along for the ride, they might as well read a book or watch a movie; one of the many reasons that people play roleplaying games is because they can affect the outcome. If they can't do that, what's the point?

However, players will always surprise you. No matter how many contingency plans you put into play, no matter how many possibilities you prepare for before the session, your players will miss clues you think are obvious or come up with plans for which you had no contingency lined up. If the players miss something essential, or take an action which throws off everything you'd planned, consider one of the following possibilities:

DURING THE SESSION

- **Give them a hint**. When possible, don't just give them a random hint, or throw the clue that they missed right at their heads. Check your notes on everyone's sheets (or the copies of player sheets you keep at hand, a highly recommended practice!) and find a reason to give the hint to one player or call for an applicable roll. The character suddenly receiving a hint based on the things they thought to put on their sheet feels far weightier and more significant than the Storyguide saying "come on, here's the clue!" and will make your players feel like the choices they make with their characters matter. See core clues and alternative clues, **Trinity Continuum Core,** pp. 81-83, or "Losing the Plot" (p. XX) for more detailed information on how to structure clues and information.

- **Talk it out**. It's okay to say "Hey, I think we need to end early this time, because I don't know what might happen because of your actions," or "If you take that route, this plot ends pretty quickly, and I'll have to do some work in order to take your actions into account." If the players don't want the plot to end, they may decide to change their actions (this should be done by consensus and conversation — don't push anyone to undo half a session of roleplay and adventure!)

BETWEEN SESSIONS/ DURING DOWNTIME

- **Downtime actions aren't just for players!** When discussing what happens between sessions, give yourself time to process what changed from the last session and what this will change for the next session. It's completely okay, and in fact recommended, to revise your plans for the next session and change where the plot goes in response to what the characters have done. This makes it collaborative storytelling, rather than just players sitting at a table having a story dictated to them.

- **Talk it out (again).** If you find yourself painted into a corner, talk with your players about how to paint your way out of it again. Your players will appreciate you being honest with them, and if you must adjust something, it's best to do it collaboratively.

- **Maintain an outline or other loosely written plan for your chronicle.** Whether you use an elaborately updated and formatted private wiki, a notebook filled with lots of arrows and quickly jotted notes, or simply an online word

processing document with an outline in it, take the time to update your notes during downtime between sessions. Much like how computer programmers often keep rubber ducks on their desk and talk to them when they encounter a bug that they can't figure out, maintaining the chronicle's outline and notes can help you as a Storyguide figure out what about your chronicle works, what frustrates you, and what you might want to change.

Consider using some tools in Moving Pieces (p. XX) as your chronicle evolves and as — if you are a novice Storyguide — you become more comfortable with more complexity and less certainty in your planning. You may find yourself moving between Three Acts (No Waiting), Moving Pieces, and Living World as you evolve as a Storyguide, or you may hew strictly to Three Acts (No Waiting) for the entirety of your Storyguiding career. Any way that works for you is perfectly fine.

STRUCTURAL TENDENCIES

Three Acts (No Waiting) lends itself well to the three areas of action, though advanced or intense intrigue players may find it somewhat limiting, and Storyguides may struggle to respond authentically if the players take intrigue far down the rabbit hole. Storyguides may find this story structure suited to action-adventure and procedural stories, or any other chronicle with several fixed points which the group must hit for the story to make any sense. Three Acts (No Waiting) is a linear structure, suited to linear stories with a clear beginning, middle and end. There's nothing wrong with linear stories — the only issue is putting a linear story into a non-linear structure and vice-versa. That's where people get frustrated, and players lose focus.

DRAMATIC EDITING

The systems for Dramatic Editing (p. XX) permit players to make changes to the story, literally editing the world around them. This mechanism provides a genre-appropriate way for players to collaborate with Storyguides and may frustrate people using the Three Acts (No Waiting) structure. Likewise, it can leave a Storyguide at loose ends if — for example — a player uses Dramatic Editing to avoid the assassins sent to murder him in his bed, but the Storyguide had every confidence the character would overpower those assassins and discover a core clue pointing him to the dastardly merchant who hired them in the first place.

When Dramatic Editing substantially changes the storyline such that the Storyguide needs to edit their notes or change the structure of what comes after, that's okay! It's also okay to be frustrated when an outline ends up useless because a player zigged when you thought they would zag. Storyguides are players, too, and it's okay (really) to need to take some time to regroup, whether that means using safety tools to take five minutes and think, or even ending a session early to plan. The best laid plans of mice and Storyguides gang aft agley.

Pros of the Three Acts method of Storyguiding: Structured; Permits the use of pre-determined modules or pre-written adventures; easy for even brand-new players to understand and follow along; suited for novice Storyguides; moves people along the story even if they aren't as active in pursuing it.

Cons of the Three Acts method of Storyguiding: Can become too structured; can cause players (or Storyguides!) to feel constrained; may conflict with Dramatic Editing.

MOVING PIECES

The Moving Pieces Storyguiding style works similarly to Living World (see p. XX) but with a little more structure. The Storyguide creates the Storyguide characters as in the Living World method, but also creates several scenes or moments of decisive action with which the characters must engage to move the plot forward. These scenes or moments of decisive action can be as loose as "the brother talks to us" or as complicated as "the henchman directs the player characters toward the philosopher's grand new mechanism, leading to a conflict which the philosopher escapes via this method," but should remain relatively open.

Some Storyguides find that using index cards or other movable pieces or software which approximates them, works well for the Moving Pieces style, permitting them to literally move plot pieces around, amend them when characters take actions, or delete story points which become unnecessary or outdated.

STRUCTURAL TENDENCIES

Moving Pieces lends itself particularly well to procedural and intrigue stories; the flexibility of the story structure of Moving Pieces means that if players discover pieces out of order, the Storyguide can maneuver around them. Storyguides may find Moving Pieces a little challenging (or superfluous!) for action-adventure stories which progress from point A to point B, such as labyrinth crawls or any structure which requires the players to literally move along a set path.

It's What My Character Would Do

Maybe, sure. But is it what will make the most fun for the table?

Some of the conflict which comes into play with players when dealing with Living World or looser-style Storyguiding comes from the idea that you must do only what your character would do and doing anything else is a betrayal of the story.

Many characters want to live a quiet and undisturbed life, and if they got what they wanted, there'd be no story. Even if that's not the case, roleplaying games are just that — games — and all characters are fictional and subject to the whims and wishes of their creators. If that's not what your character would do, and you get stuck as a result? Change the character. It's totally within your rights, and in fact, ***you're the only person who can***.

Pros of the Moving Pieces method of Storyguiding: A sort of "middle ground" between Living World and Three Acts; a good method for Storyguides with some experience; pushes the action along without players feeling like they're "railroaded;" good for chronicles where players may have to miss due to work or family life so that pieces are easily moved around for the availability of different players.

Cons of the Moving Pieces method of Storyguiding: Can be difficult to manage without outside supports such as cards or a system of tracking story points; can feel too disjointed to some players.

Living World

The Living World approach to Storyguiding adheres less to a rigid storyline and more to a fluid, adaptable means of response to player actions. While the Storyguide crafts a rough idea of story beats she might like to hit, the main backbone of the Living World approach to Storyguiding comes from its well-developed Storyguide characters.

The Storyguide begins the Living World approach by creating a main antagonist or two, building them out similarly to characters — that is, not just creating a collection of stats, but using Paths and other background-building tools to create a SCG that is, if not as fully realized as the player characters, at least somewhere in the same neighborhood. For example, she might create a hubristic philosopher seeking to unlock the secret powers of an artifact to breach the laws of life and death and resurrect her lover.

She may then create some second-tier SGCs who support, enable, or oppose the main antagonist — perhaps the brother of her lover who knows her plan and doesn't approve of it but doesn't stand in her way, or a former assistant who can't conscience what she's doing but doesn't know who to approach. These second-tier characters don't require as much development as the primary antagonist, but still have a few notes on their main motivations, desires, and needs, as well as a handful of stats in case the Storyguide needs to roll for them at any point.

You Don't Own Me

Sometimes, Storyguide characters take on a life of their own — whether or not you choose the Living World method — and that's okay. Giving yourself permission to let those personalities live and breathe means you're allowing your players (and their characters) the ability to affect the world. By allowing them to turn enemies (or neutral parties) into allies and friends, you're allowing their actions to affect the greater world. Likewise, if they can't lose their allies and friends under any circumstances, their actions have no meaning. Allow their allies to become enemies, and their enemies to become friends. Let what your players do ***matter***. Let them change the world.

Third-tier antagonists are the philosopher's henchmen, her victims (intentional or no) or any random people who the players may encounter. Keeping a couple of standard antagonist builds on hand for any necessary dice rolls, and a list of names and quirks or personality archetypes to select from if one of your players wants to interact more with one of those SGCs, makes it easy to make up characters on the fly. Don't be surprised if your players suddenly start caring an awful lot more about those side characters — it's okay if those third-tier characters become more important!

Once the Storyguide has created these characters, she introduces one or more of them to the players through an instigating incident. Perhaps the philosopher comes across a character in the market and behaves suspiciously, or perhaps something the philosopher works with explodes, drawing the characters to the scene of the crime, or perhaps the aforementioned brother of her dead lover approaches a character for help. Whatever the case, once the instigating incident kicks off the action, much depends on the behavior of the players and their characters. The Storyguide can then decide how they react to what the players do, rather than pushing the players through a set of pre-determined plot points.

LOSING THE PLOT

If the action founders at any point, or if the players become lost, confused, or overwhelmed, it is imperative for the Storyguide to offer another instigating incident to push the characters toward the next answer or toward an option which moves the story forward. Using core clues and alternative clues (**Trinity Continuum Core** pp. 81-83) helps here: when using the Living World style of Storyguiding, a Storyguide should keep a handful of these clues on hand which can be adapted for several situations throughout the location for the day's session. **Core clues**, essential for the main plot, may be more challenging to adapt to different locations or individual Storyguide characters, while **alternative clues**, or those which guide characters toward personal agendas or side stories, may prove easier to weave into different locations or with different Storyguide characters. When writing down your core clues as **raw information (Trinity Continuum Core,** p. 83) for a session, consider breaking them into two parts: **basic raw information** which you can pass on if players become confused, distracted, or fail too many rolls, either as a Consolation or to bring the plot back into focus, and **advanced raw information** which gives more details or an additional piece of information that lends context to the basic information they've already received, if the players make successful rolls as per the **Trinity Continuum Core**.

- The players get lost and confused, so the Storyguide directs a disillusioned henchman toward one of them; the henchman's complaints over a glass of wine at a festival catch the character's ears, giving them new information and a way to re-engage with the plot.

- After failing several rolls one after the other, the players suggest ending the session early, frustrated with their dice. The Storyguide consults the group's sheets, notes one of the characters' Skills, and parcels out a piece of raw information to one of the players based on their character's abilities. Afterward, the Storyguide notes which character got that bit of bonus information so she doesn't accidentally hand out those information bits to the same player too often, since that can sour the assistance.

As with all other story structures suggested in this chapter, Living World works best if the Storyguide maintains a loose outline or set of notes about the present situations into which they have thrust their players. It's easy to become overwhelmed with the number of details in a Living World scenario, especially in chronicles which run for extended periods of time, so keeping accurate notes helps the Living World from becoming a collection of random things the Storyguide made up which have no coherent throughline. The former is fun; the latter tends to frustrate players, especially when dealing with interpersonal drama or intrigue with Storyguide characters.

Pros of the Living World method of Storyguiding: Flexible; fast-moving in the hands of an experienced Storyguide; able to be adapted on a whim.

Cons of the Living World method of Storyguiding: Requires motivated players who take action; may feel too improvisational for some players; inexperienced Storyguides, or those who prefer greater order, may find this method overwhelming.

EXPECTING THE UNEXPECTED

Whichever method (or combination of methods) you use, at some point, your players will surprise you. Whatever you think they might do, they'll choose something you didn't expect. When that happens:

Don't change the facts on the ground because you're not ready for the players to succeed yet. If your

IT'S NOT ABOUT YOU

One of the best pieces of acting advice applies to building characters — whether player characters or Storyguide characters — as well. "It's not about you." Very few people truly keep their own needs first in mind, and the most well-developed and beloved characters almost invariably have someone or something else that they care about more than anything else in the world. Iron Man in ***Avengers: Endgame*** doesn't care most about himself, but about preventing his daughter from being erased by timeline manipulations. Queen Gertrude's main concern isn't herself, but her son Hamlet, and how his behaviors worry her. Princess Leia centers the needs of the Rebellion above her own needs and feelings.

What does your character care about most? Keep a list of five or six fairly generic motivations ("protect my home," "keep this job," "make it back to my daughter") on hand for even your created-on-the-spot Storyguide characters, and they'll all seem much more like Real People and far less like cardboard cutouts that you're pulling out of your pocket in a rush (even if that's the case).

players do something clever that you hadn't considered, and you change the facts of the situation because their proposed course of action solves the plot too fast, you essentially punish the players for engaging with your plot and thinking about it. Nothing discourages a table faster than realizing what they do doesn't matter. On the flip side, little feels more exciting and fulfilling as a Storyguide than realizing that your players have committed themselves to figuring out your Big Mystery, and because they have done so, they've come up with a solution you couldn't have possible foreseen or expected. The moment that the penny drops, and the eyes of your players light up with recognition, can either discourage or delight a Storyguide — choose to engage with the excitement of your players and you will enjoy their discoveries even more.

It's okay to say, "I don't know the answer to that," and either take a break to look up rules or to consider what results might occur because of the player's action. It's even okay to end the session early one week so you can come back to the table with a solution which will move the story forward while honoring the choices and actions your players have taken, and the ideas they bring to the table. Just make sure to talk with them — if you suddenly stop fifteen minutes (or more!) early when they take an unexpected action, your players may misread you and feel like they've done something wrong when they've merely done something you didn't plan for when laying out the session. Telling your players that you want to give them the best story possible, and you absolutely didn't account for the possibility that they'd do what they just did will both reassure them and hopefully make them feel clever and cool, rather than worried that they screwed up!

There's nothing wrong with telling your players, "Honestly, you took me by surprise, and if we go this route, the plot ends more quickly," and discussing with them the possible options. They might still choose to take the route in question, in which case, it's okay for the plot to end more quickly than you planned and to move on to something else. Nothing kills enjoyment faster than feeling like you're stuck in a plot slog which could have ended weeks ago. No plot survives contact with the players, but Storyguides are not plot machines capable of spitting out ideas without end, and the sooner every player at the table (including the Storyguide) absorbs that idea, the better your sessions will be.

GAME SCOPE

Determining the scope of the game overlaps with the creation of characters and determining the method of Storyguiding which you prefer to use. **Aegis** is intended to accommodate a wide variety of story types, which means your game could either center on one tiny hamlet in Greece or span the entire planet (and further!) You may wish to determine the scope of the game before character creation or to consider it while people create their characters but figuring out how big you want your chronicle to get will affect its tone and timbre.

In this section, we'll cover some of the various

considerations when determining game scope, how to handle them, and how they affect plot, pacing, and structure.

Communication

In the ancient world, news traveled much more slowly than it does today — we're so used to nearly-instantaneous communication via the internet that it's difficult to imagine a world where it might take weeks or even months to receive important news. It's not just the internet, though — the concept of the modern postal service is much younger than most people realize. The US Postal Service has roots that go back to 1775, but the modern USPS only came into being in 1970. Further, while postal service in England goes back about 500 years, going back any further than that found people relying on private messengers or simply trying to find someone going in the correct direction who might deliver a missive or pass it off to the next person going in the right direction.

The concept of slow communication can provide a source of horror or tension within your game. While today someone might look on social media or on a news site to discover what's causing the sky to turn red at night and ash to rain from the air, in 79 CE, one could only guess that the top had come off Pompeii unless they were close enough to see it or had received word from someone who had witnessed the event. The sound of an army approaching where no one expected Caesar to dare cross the Rubicon — for a chronicle which takes a step westward into Italy, for example — or the weeks it takes to deliver a letter to Gaul and receive a reply can ratchet up the tension in a chronicle, but it can just as easily become an impediment.

As with all things, the speed of communication should move no slower than *the speed of plot*. If the Storyguide Character bringing back a message from Gaul telling the characters that Caesar approaches would realistically take weeks, but the message arriving too late means the characters can have no agency over their response to Caesar's arrival, the Storyguide should find some way for the message to arrive faster. Perhaps the gods themselves intervene (see: Involving the Divine, p. XX), perhaps the messenger happens upon an artifact or strange circumstance which allows them to arrive more quickly, or perhaps something delays Caesar and allows the messenger to arrive more quickly.

This doesn't mean there should never be a moment where the speed of communication doesn't affect the plot; if the arrival of Caesar, or any other large plot element, isn't meant for players to affect it, and it merely sets up the next stage of the chronicle, then delay that messenger instead! All things require balance, and the speed of communication is no different.

Exploration and Travel

As with communication, exploration and travel take much longer in **Aegis** than in the modern world — in most circumstances, anyway. The vast majority of travel, especially short-term journeys, took place on foot. Armies marched from place to place, people walked miles to visit friends and family, and travel beyond one's hometown took weeks, if not months. Travelers planned to sleep on the road or stay at accommodations intended specifically for those on the move — the age-old tavern at the crossroads — or pay a local to sleep in a stable. Getting from place to place meant unpaved roads and twisting mountain trails, the possibility of running into bandits or unfriendly locals, and the potential for illness, exposure, or attacks by wild animals. Likewise, aquatic travel came with the hazards of storms, badly maintained boats, mutinous crews, and local uprisings or wars between city-states of which the players might not be aware. (Remember, news of those internecine struggles takes much longer to get around!)

Does this mean that every time the characters at your table travel to see someone that they should have to play out every journey? Please, please no! The best guideline for *when to play out travel* versus *when to skip to the end* is: *will this accomplish something story-wise?* Are you giving a player the ability

But That's Not Realistic!

The considerations and guidelines in this section should only serve as guidelines for your game; if anything hinders your table having fun, ***change it***. At the end of the day, **Aegis** is a game, and a good Storyguide can find a way to finesse anything which causes disruption at the table rather than reinforcing the story which the group wants to tell together

to show off their wilderness skills? Will an encounter with bandits along the road allow your table's silver-tongued smooth talker the opportunity to get the group out of trouble (or at least try to do so)? If a storm blows their ship off-course, will one of the characters be able to plot out their return, or do you have a cyclops for Nobody to meet? Do you intend to pass along an important McGuffin or piece of information when the characters encounter a Mysterious Old Woman along the road? For that matter, could the characters use a little downtime to carry on personal conversations or to discuss and make plans?

If the answer to any of these questions is yes, then make the travel count. Otherwise, *move at the speed of plot*. It's no fun getting to the battlefield just in time to miss all the action, after all, unless getting to the battlefield just in time to miss all the action is already a defined and necessary part of the plot. Sometimes showing up to the burning ruins of the village is the plot point that the soldiers must hit to find the discarded doll, after all. Don't stick to travel times to the detriment of plot, and don't stick to plot to the detriment of the feel, mood, and theme of **Aegis**.

Conversely, if the characters would arrive too quickly and end up standing around on a beach picking their noses until the Storyguide characters arrive, or the moon becomes full, or whatever the next big plot point is, there's nothing wrong with giving their ship slack sails and making the trip from one port to the next take a few days longer.

Location, Location, Location

While you may decide before you begin to restrain your chronicle to a single town, city-state, or even to Greece, players have a way of surprising every Storyguide. Consider sketching out a few brief notes about surrounding areas, just in case the plot takes a sharp left and your players want to head off to the next city-state just in case they have ideas about what to do about your big plot point.

However, it isn't necessary for a Storyguide to know everything about the locations in question. A rough idea of population, major players in local happenings, and one or two important buildings or institutions in that location goes a long way toward allowing a Storyguide to spin out believable and interesting stories just about anywhere. If you're not sure where things might go, consider keeping a simple pool of potential locations and people who can be applied anywhere your characters go. Put a couple of quick notes about your Storyguide characters in a virtual document or on index cards, and you'll be prepared.

Don't be afraid to redirect players back to the central location of the game by whatever means works for your group; sometimes being the Storyguide means acting a little bit like a sheepdog and herding the story back to where it belongs rather than allowing it to range too far afield. However, permitting your players to roam a little bit afield may allow for some fun roleplaying opportunities. If your players have been moving from plot point to plot point for the last few sessions, it doesn't hurt to let them explore a little bit to permit intercharacter interaction.

Complicating Factors

A group composed of characters at differing power levels — for example, if a new player joins your group after you've been playing for a while — or all of one character type or another, can present unique

A Little Downtime

Sometimes the best way to get to the truth of a character is by looking at how they behave when the plot takes its laser focus off them and their friends. Travel time makes a perfect vehicle for that sort of rich interaction. By allowing your characters to have time and space to roleplay what happens on the ship between point A and point B or creating a few Storyguide Characters to travel along with the party as they move along the road between one place and another, you give the characters breathing room and allow them to both develop individually and as a group.

The only thing more boring than never stretching your roleplay legs, however, is when those moments drag on too long. Don't be afraid to jump in and move the characters to the next location once the conversation and roleplay naturally slows or flags. That's your job as the Storyguide, to direct — gently — the route of the game and its play.

DIVERSITY ISN'T A BUZZWORD

By the 8th century BCE, Phoenician trade routes stretched through the Mediterranean, down the Atlantic coast of Africa, and as far north as modern Great Britain. These trade routes brought all manner of belief systems, people, and cultural touchstones to the Mediterranean. The modern conception of ancient Greece as a homogeneous society fails for many reasons, and it makes **Aegis** much more boring. While the main action in **Aegis** happens in Greece, at the point in history where we've set **Aegis**, Greece had a population with origins spanning the globe. Humans have always moved and traveled, so don't let the setting constrain you: it is perfectly in keeping with history to bring in people and ideas from all over the ancient world.

challenges for a Storyguide. Give some thought to how to handle differing power levels or group composition up front and you'll avoid bruised egos, hurt feelings, and stomped toes (hopefully metaphorical) at the table.

POWER DIFFERENTIAL

When a new player joins the group after the chronicle has run for a while, or if players choose to play different character types with differing power levels and skill sets, sometimes the new players or those with lower power levels become frustrated because they're closed out. But if everything is tailored to not splatter the new character across the wall, metaphorically or literally, the older players may find themselves bored and no longer challenged by the difficulties placed before them.

Foremost, talk with your players up front about the issue. Think about the potential solutions and ask them which they'd prefer, or if they have other ideas which you may not have considered. Some chronicles find it easiest to simply keep everyone on a similar power level by offering new players a boost so their characters don't enter so far behind (and stay so far behind, since they will be unlikely to advance quickly enough to close the gap, no matter how long they play). While some players may feel cheated by someone coming in with the same prowess as their character does when they've been playing for a much longer period of time, the possibility of a more harmonious play experience often outweighs those feelings. At the end of the day, having fun together means more than dots on a sheet.

However, the new player may not necessarily want to enter at that power level, either! If you have a new player, they may wish to start with a lower-power character in order to familiarize themself with **Aegis** before leaping into the deep end. In that case, you might offer them an accelerated advancement path until they "catch up" to your other players. Call it the "Primary Character" plan if you like — the new character comes in at a significant power disadvantage, goes through a few training sessions, and suddenly can fight gods at the same level as the other characters. You can couch this in-game by giving them an encounter with an item which bestows them their new skills, having the other player characters participate in teaching them, or simply have it happen without explaining it at all. "So the story can happen" is a valid way to approach powering up a new character.

Whatever you do to integrate a new player and a new character, do it with intention and with the buy-in of all of your players, not just the new player. If you make your established characters and players part of the solution rather than simply bringing in a new player without taking steps to address these issues and integrating the new character to the group, you will see greater success in keeping that new player around without losing (or losing the investment of) your existing players.

If your new player stays at a lower power level for a longer period, you may struggle with putting challenges in front of your players which both involve the less-powerful character and challenge the existing characters. In this case, consider ethical challenges rather than sheer mechanical ones, or challenges in which order of operations matters as much as any powers or skills which the higher-powered characters bring to the table. Yes, the characters *can* blow up Mount Olympus, but does that mean they *should*? If the means by which your characters come to the end of the story, and the implications of the decisions they make, matters as much as the actions they take, you will have a much easier time integrating differing power levels.

MIXED GROUPS

To a certain extent, mixed groups — groups which contain a mix of Champions, Oracles, and Olympians — can present an easier time for Storyguides, because not everyone can do the same thing. On the flip side, mixed groups can present certain challenges in that not everyone has the same goals, backgrounds, or abilities, either. This is where a well-structured Session Zero and effective communication come into play! If your players talk up front about their expectations, you'll be able to better tailor the experiences to the characters they make rather than simply taking a "generic **Aegis**" approach to plot structure and layout. See Character Creation, p. XX, for guidance on how to build characters in **Aegis**, and remember the following thoughts: what brings these characters together in the first place? What kind of glue holds the group together? Do they share a common goal, a common background, or did they all grow up in the same small town?

Creating affirmative hooks between all the characters makes for a stronger and more integrated group. Affirmative hooks go beyond "we all met at the Prancing Pegasus right when a Storyguide character dropped the first event of the plot on us" and tie the characters together more strongly. Two Oracles taught at the same school or two Olympians with a shared background may find both strength and interpersonal conflict in these links. Affirmative hooks range from something as simple as growing up near one another or sharing a similar goal to more in-depth hooks the characters might not even be aware of when the chronicle starts (but the players should generally be on the same page about it).

Consider as well offering your players the opportunity to create hooks that they're not aware of when the game begins — they can do this by permitting you as a Storyguide to create a plot hook which binds their characters together and which you will reveal later in the chronicle. Remember all of your safety tools and all of the conversations you had about Lines, Veils, and desired/undesired themes and ideas when creating these hooks, so you don't spring "both of you are children of Dionysus" on someone who strongly objected to including family-related surprises, or mysteries about families of origin, or infidelity.

HOMOGENEOUS GROUPS

So, your players have all created Olympians. Or Oracles. Or...

Now what?

Homogeneous groups may seem somewhat easier to run with, because the players have chosen a single group to represent, but they present their own difficulties. If the players have all selected similar Skills and Gifts, they may end up feeling like they spend most of their time stepping on each other's toes, which doesn't end up being much fun for anyone. If too many characters end up with the same powers or same goals, this can present a challenge to the Storyguide. This is part of why **Aegis** character creation should be undertaken as a group, but even if two people are fixed on having the exact same elevator pitch concept, it's possible to provide interesting stories for these characters.

Primarily, realize that even if you create two characters with the same character sheet and the same background, two players will approach those characters so differently that you'll end up with entirely different people. Getting defensive over the idea of two Olympians with similar backgrounds prevents you from experiencing the possibilities which open up when you have two parallel characters in a chronicle, for example. Think of it this way: even if you give two chefs the exact same ingredients to make a grilled cheese sandwich, they'll have different approaches, and those sandwiches won't taste exactly the same. Your players are all expert chefs, so trust them to talk to each other and develop these different approaches.

When you consider plots, a homogeneous group can present a lot of the same difficulties as a group of disparate power levels. How do you make sure that everyone gets their moment in the limelight?

No matter how similar the characters, there will be subtle differences between them; think about the ways you can highlight those differences and use those to provide moments for each player to shine. Likewise, you can utilize their similarity to advantage by creating situations in which those similarities create opportunities for teamwork which might not otherwise exist. If you begin an encounter by setting it up so it looks like the characters' similarities will set them at odds or make them compete for the same resource, the solution could revolve around needing to work together. In discovering their differences and similarities, the characters learn to celebrate their overlap rather than seeing it as a negative.

DIVINE PRESENCE, OR FIGHTING ZEUS IN A PARKING LOT

How much will divinity matter in your chronicle? **Aegis** has room in it for chronicles which have an awful lot of contact with the divine, but your characters

could land anywhere between "yesterday we fought Zeus in a parking lot" and "yeah, they exist, my cousin's best friend's wife saw Apollo pulling a chariot, or so she says, but I don't really believe her." Exactly how much contact with the divine your chronicle contains is up to no one but you.

Agreeing on the level of divinity is one discussion the table should have during Session Zero, and while this can change, it shouldn't change drastically in either direction without the table talking about it. Bringing in a deity to have lunch on a game whose players have agreed they would prefer not to have direct divine intervention can cause severe thematic whiplash. But if your table decides they'd like a little bit of gods here and there, a drip or drab of ambrosia, as it were, and there's a good dramatic reason to have the gods interfere, great! If you do this, however, the gods should probably only interfere on behalf of the players, and then only in ways that don't steal the spotlight from the player characters. If you agree that divine intervention should be sparing, and then Apollo shows up to complete the mission your table's been working on for three sessions, your players might get more than a little salty — and justifiably so.

Aegis is not primarily a game about gods or divinity but the intervention of gods can make for a fun dramatic moment. Just make sure that the intercessions of Apollo, Demeter, or Hera support the actions of the players, or disrupt them in a way which doesn't undercut player agency or character coolness.

The existence of Mighty Oaths presents an opportunity to have gods appear or intercede in events; likewise, Dramatic Editing may allow Storyguides to place the fingerprints of divinity on the events of the story. It's important, therefore, to establish up front whether these mechanics necessitate the intervention of the divine, whether the characters are simply genre-savvy enough to edit their own realities, or some other option.

HEPHAEST-WHO?

At this level, the gods have as much contact with player characters as their players do: the characters may dedicate a mission or a victory to their chosen deity, but no one's actually ever seen a god. If divine intercession happens, use a light touch, and make that intercession something that the players could reasonably deny, or something slightly creepy and mysterious.

STORY HOOKS

After a sacrifice to Aphrodite, a young woman finds herself in the company of a beautiful young person who not only makes her heart (and other things) flutter madly, but who brings her information she needs: they're about to be betrayed by one of the councilors from their hometown. If they hurry, they might be able to intercede and take the teeth out of that betrayal.

A character loses his favorite tool, and after looking for it all day, in desperation throws his head back and yells at the ceiling, "Hephaestus, I swear that if you help me find this hammer, I'll spill blood on my anvil for every sword I make hereafter." He leaves to get dinner, and when he comes back, spots the glimmer of metal next to his anvil in a spot he checked three times. Does he choose to spill blood on his anvil that night while working?

A devotee of Artemis spots a silver flash of movement while alone in the woods one night; she follows the rustling in the trees and as she steps into a clearing, she witnesses a white deer disappearing into the trees on the other side of the clearing. Her friend lays wounded, bleeding into the earth. Did her patron lead her, or is it a mere coincidence?

I MET APHRODITE ONCE

If your table selects this amount of intervention, they may occasionally feel like someone's watching them even when no one's there or feel as though they actually spot the gods and their influence. The gestures of deities grow larger and more obvious, and it grows harder to deny that the gods — whoever and whatever they might actually be — exist and have active opinions about what the player characters do.

STORY HOOKS

After breaking her favorite lute, a character takes a walk to a local market to replace it. Along the way, she meets a short, stout man with curly hair who both smells profoundly of stale wine and promises her much better fortune if she'll give up the lute and instead take up the syrinx as her chosen instrument.

The adherent of Aphrodite seduces the young person who makes her everything get all twitter-pated, but after she gets the information from them that she desires, she meets a slender woman on the beach who stands in the ocean spray and solemnly informs her that attempting a relationship with this person will cause her only pain. She promises that if her adherent can break her own heart in service to Aphrodite, she will be rewarded five-fold. Just one problem: the character has already sworn an oath to her new beloved...

The ad hoc adherent of Hephaestus forgot to bleed on his anvil yesterday, and today, one of his swords shatters in the hand of a friend, causing that friend grievous injury. How will be make things right with the god he offended? Will Hephaestus actually show up when the character goes to make sacrifice at the temple?

APOLLO GIVES ME RIDES TO SCHOOL

At this level, the gods have significant influence on everything and anything: they show up somewhat regularly, they have active influence on the things their followers experience, and whenever there's a scale to put their thumbs on, they do so gleefully and regularly. Special care should be given not to overuse the gods, since their presence can deeply unbalance a game or make players feel like what they do doesn't matter. They're gods, after all, and their presence (or absence) can quickly cause a plot to fall apart or make players stop trying to solve puzzles.

If you choose to have a heavily divine presence in your game, use the gods to present the characters with moral dilemmas, or give them contradicting instructions from two different sources. Don't make things easier on them because the divine exists in the game or use them to negate the choices that the characters make — use the existence of divinity as a goad or a foil.

STORY HOOKS

Apollo literally shows up to transport the player characters from one place to the other; they make it to an important battle just in time because the Sun God intercedes with his amazing chariot. While catching a ride to the battlefield, a character notices strange markings on Apollo's wrist which resemble a brand. What do those indistinct letters mean? They don't look Greek at all.

Persephone's giant magic elevator leads into an underground world populated not by the dead (or perhaps not entirely by the dead) but by humans in a forced-labor situation. Trying to free them will incur the wrath of Hades, yes, but also Persephone, who currently shows the characters her favor but whose wrath and whose cultists are deeply feared.

Hestia offers the characters a quick way out of their current predicament, but with a condition which will keep them from responding properly to

any future concerns for at least a year. Do they take her bargain and essentially close themselves off from adventure for a full year? (And if they do, how do you, the Storyguide, prevent them from ending the chronicle early? What loophole might be presented to them which they might exercise?)

How Much Magic?

Along with divinity comes the question of magic in **Aegis**. The level of realism vs. magical reality is another one of those calibrations important to determine up front. Do you want your characters to hitch a ride with a guy pulling a chariot across the sky? You can do that — if you want to.

Aegis permits all sorts of play on this level, from street-level games where not only do the gods not show up but there's little evidence of the supernatural, to games where Apollo does in fact trot down from the heavens in his chariot. How much of that you want to bring to your table is, with all things, up to you.

In a game which focuses primarily on certain definitions of realism, whatever powers the characters might have, they explain away, or find a technological way to explain which matches the known technological advancement level of the time. Turn the magic/science knob all the way to 11, and your characters can skate across the sky on spaceship parts fashioned into chariots. Where you set that dial is up to you as a table.

Speaking of technology, the ancient world contained a great deal more interesting technology than the armchair enthusiast of sword and sandal movies might assume. Ancient Greeks knew the world was round and its approximate size, and had developed the gear and screw, bronze casting techniques, torsion catapults, and steam power! Every era believes itself the most developed era ever to exist, and that humanity has only ever progressed technologically, but this simply isn't true.

Many technologies, mathematical principles, and mechanical concepts have appeared repeatedly in history, independently discovered by multiple different individuals and cultures. Found and lost and found again, these concepts make for fascinating story seeds. Talk about technology levels up front with your players as well, especially if the development of mundane, non-alien technology or its use will form the crux of a storyline. If your players assume that ancient Greece didn't contain many of the same technologies that modern Western culture didn't redevelop until the Industrial Revolution, they won't pick up the clues that you put down about someone attempting to develop a steamboat. All of the pieces for a steamboat existed during the time in which **Aegis** is set; it's plausible that a Storyguide character might think to assemble gears, screws, and steam power to create a paddle wheel system. If your players don't think that such technology existed, however, their brains will never make that connection, no matter how many core clues you drop in their laps.

Antagonists: Gods and Monsters

Ambrosia represents a tempting glance into divinity. Anyone who encounters it can say that they have witnessed the grandeur of Olympus, dipped a hand into the rushing waters of the River Styx, or heard the echoes of Khaos's sleeping murmurs. Its existence compels philosophers, architects, poets, generals, and monarchs to abandon all of their previous pursuits. What is this divine liquid? What is its true nature? Can it be controlled? Can it be exploited? Can it at least be weaponized?

Smart warriors know not to rely on untested blades, but ambition often trumps caution. In the bloody waters of the Aegean, no potential advantage can be ignored. Scientists and philosophers seek to understand it and direct it toward noble pursuits. Its arrival brought forth horrors and wonders in equal measure, could humanity use the latter to address the former?

Monsters created by ambrosia often become violent and aggressive, but this is not because ambrosia twisted their minds: the trauma of transformation and dysmorphia of a twisted body can warp kind souls without proper support and assistance.

Unfortunately, this is not a world of understanding or patience, and sometimes a person's new form is dangerous to be around. These tormented souls are doomed to lonely lives away from their families, their humanity a half-remembered dream.

Champions, Olympians, and Oracles are no different. While their newfound skills and powers come with few downsides, excellence can be isolating in its own way. As they find new success, they are sought by hopeful devotees, would-be worshippers, and jealous rivals. Strangers seek their divinity, not their humanity, while those close to them grow embittered by jealousy or simply find themselves forgotten as the Inspired revel in their newfound glory.

As their power reveals who they are, those exposed to ambrosia set out to right the wrongs they've suffered and reshape the world to their wishes. Sometimes their causes are just and righteous, but even the best of intentions and noblest of pursuits can lead men down dark paths. Just revolutionaries overthrow their oppressive rulers and find themselves becoming a new tyrant to enforce the peace they fought for. Soothsayers refuse to dispense their wisdom to those they deem unfit or unworthy. And above all else, they destroy any potential threat to their new power with extreme prejudice.

Antagonist-Only Edges

Storyguide characters may select the following Edges in addition to the options available to player characters, representing capabilities or properties inappropriate for player use or abstractions of more complex suites of abilities.

ELUSIVE TARGET (• - • • •)

The antagonist may create a Complication each session at this Edge's value during the first combat or action scene they appear in. If it's not overcome, this character escapes the scene, forcing the characters to give immediate pursuit in a chase scene or accept they've lost track of the antagonist.

EUREKA! (• •)

The antagonist may use their most applicable pool to create improvised super-science items. They gain their Enhancement value to this action.

SKIRMISHER (•)

The antagonist is skilled at moving through combat. Whenever the antagonist makes a mixed action with a sprint and an attack, they use the higher pool. This includes making sprint actions in the air and underwater.

Follower Edges

Followers (see p. XX) may select these Edges in addition to the options available to characters and antagonists. Because they enhance a Follower's connection to the characters, they are not useful for characters, unless the players want to reinforce a Bond or relationship between their characters.

ALWAYS AROUND WHEN YOU NEED THEM (• •)

Prerequisite: Source 1+

The Follower spends a point of Source to appear in a scene at the most dramatically appropriate moment. No explanation is necessary for how they managed the feat unless they're established to already be somewhere

Tuning Encounters

Consideration needs be paid to crafting encounters to properly threaten the characters. Un-Inspired, Champions, Oracles, and Olympians use similar mechanics but operate on different tiers of power. If the characters are all playing Olympians, for instance, the Storyguide will need to use a greater number of more powerful antagonists to effectively threaten them.

At the starting level, a combat-focused group can handle up to a Major Threat antagonist. Lean into cool extraordinary powers, Gifts, and spectacular Edges to give the antagonist a unique flair.

For groups with a moderate focus (only one or two of four players have chosen to play a combat-focused character, for example), they can face up to a Moderate Threat antagonist. You may have one major character with some minor character minions for the other characters to deal with or include interesting Field Complications (p. XX) for characters to interact with.

For a group less focused on combat abilities, keep antagonists to no stronger than a Medium Threat. With the right choice of Edges, this will be a suitable and engaging challenge for a group less interested in engaging with the combat system.

else or the location is impossible to get to such as a fortified inner sanctum or only accessible through supernatural means that the Follower doesn't possess.

EYE OF ARTEMIS (•)

So long as the Follower can see an enemy in cover, the Follower's allies may deal damage to the enemy instead of their cover.

I MAY KNOW SOMEONE ELSE WHO COULD HELP (• •)

The Follower's Concept Path has an additional Connection. Each Connection has a different Access and Contact and can be drawn on once per session before suffering the Suspended Condition. If the Follower's Path is suspended, drawing on any of their Connections will Strain the relationship.

KNOWN BY NAME (• - • • • •)

Prerequisite: Fame, Highborn, Patron, or Safe House

For each dot of Known By Name the Follower possesses, the characters associated with their Relationship Path may utilize the benefits of one of the prerequisite Edges that the Follower possesses by invoking their name. Doing this is free the first time in a session, but it strains the Follower's relationship with the characters after the second time. This Edge cannot be used if the Follower is suspended or Strained.

LONG ENOUGH LEVER (•)

With immense strength, one may bear the burdens of their companions. When the Follower assists an ally by using their strength, such as lifting or carrying a heavy load, boosting them to climb over a wall, holding open a portcullis or barrier, or even bodily throwing them off a burning ship, the ally gains +1 Scale. The Follower may spend a Source to add another Scale.

ORGANIZED ASSISTANT (•)

When a Follower is assisting an ally's complex action and has a relevant Enhancement, the ally may use the Follower's Enhancement a pool of Enhancement on any roll during the action. The Follower may spend a Source to buy the ally an additional attempt.

PHALANX (•)

When buying the *Dive to Cover* Defensive Stunt (**Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook** p. 105) within Short range of the Follower, the Follower's allies may treat them as a source of cover. The Follower can provide cover for up to a number of allies equal to the Follower's Size Scale.

SHIELD BROTHER (•)

When a character associated with the Follower's Relationship Path is attacked, they may attempt to block the strike. Before the attacker rolls, the Follower rolls Attack + their lowest Approach without applying Enhancement from Equipment, Difficulty 1. They may spend up to three successes on a Complication for the attacker. If the attacker doesn't buy off the Complication but succeeds, the attack hits the Follower instead of the character. If the attack hits the Follower, each damage fills one of the Follower's Health Boxes, plus an additional damage if the attacker has higher Scale than the Follower.

WINGMAN (•)

When the Follower creates a Bond with another character (see **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook** p. 87) they may establish the Bond between one of the player characters instead of themselves.

ANOMALY POWERS

In addition to the following powers, un-Inspired antagonists may list Gifts under their Powers entry. They may pay Source in lieu of Inspiration as an activation cost.

ENORMOUS SIZE

The creature has +1 Size Scale. You may select this power up to five times, stacking a creature's Size Scale. The creature may have an increased Scale for Power and/or Durability at a rating of one less than its increased Size if it's particularly dangerous or tough.

ENTRAP

This creature gains access to the "Entrap" Stunt on non-combat actions.

Entrap (3 successes): Create a Complication for all enemies of the specified type (for example: all grappled enemies, all enemies touching the ground within one range band, all swimming enemies within two range bands). Enemies who don't overcome this Complication are trapped within the antagonist and must affect an escape somehow.

ENVENOMED FANGS

The creature's teeth are filled with deadly venom. If the creature uses the Natural Weapon or Spitter powers to attack an enemy and it hits, they may spend a Source to cause an additional Injury Condition or the Unconscious Status Condition to the target.

LACERATING HIDE

The antagonist is covered in a dangerous substance such as venomous mucus or sharp dermal scales, or more fantastic effects such as acidic perspiration, freezing flesh, or impossibly fine needles. This can be taken multiple times. The first time it's taken the creature can inflict a Bruised Injury Condition on contact with a character's bare skin. The second time it's taken the creature instead deals a Lethal Injury Condition. If the creature is in a grapple with a target with exposed skin, the other grappler will take an Injury Condition unless they buy off a Complication with a level equal to the number of times the creature has Lacerating Hide each turn.

LIVING SWARM

The creature is a unified swarm of lesser creatures. In essence it is a group of tiny characters with a singular or shared identity representing them. Physical injuries are dispersed through the swarm, and it receives an extra Health level for each Size Scale that the swarm possesses plus one.

REGENERATION

Ambrosia knits the creature's rent flesh and sets its broken bones. Once per round it may spend a point of Source to automatically recover one Health.

TRANSMUTE

Some creatures have the terrifying power to change a subject into something else. By spending a Source, the creature can change any item up to its Size Scale into another item, usually specified in the creature's entry.

TUNNELING

The creature can move through earth with remarkable speed, ignoring barriers to movement by tunneling around or through them. If taken once, this includes any natural earth short of solid stone. If taken twice, this includes anything short of military fortifications.

UNLIVING

The creature is a machine, construct, or other threat that is not alive. They cannot be healed and require specialized equipment, training, or super-science to repair. They are tireless, and never suffer damage or Complications from needing food, water, rest, air, or similar biological requirements.

UNNATURAL SENSE (COMPLICATION)

The creature is immune to a type of environmental Complication that would interfere with actions dependent on senses, such as loud music or thunder blocking the ability to hear, or smoke making it impossible to smell. This Power can be taken multiple times, each time for a different type of Complication

.EXAMPLE ANTAGONISTS

The following are antagonists for use in your game.

MORTALS

Ambrosia has changed the world, but it has not been fairly distributed. Not everyone who has access to it wishes to suffer the horrifying transformations it can cause. There are vastly more ordinary

IF YOU HAVE TO ASK, YOU CAN'T AFFORD IT

Inspired mercenaries are extraordinarily lucky and possess tremendous capacity for violence. Other mercenaries are judged by the standard they set — legends and myths spawn from their deeds. Characters who offend kings or other wealthy or influential figures may find themselves beset by these preternaturally skilled opponents.

Elite mercenaries have the resources to equip themselves with the best weapons, access the best training, and may even have the favor of supernatural entities — assuming they aren't supernatural themselves. increase their Tier and give them Inspired Edges and Champion Gifts for a deadly challenge.

humans in the world than all the Champions, Oracles, Olympians, and monsters combined. Their hearts are just as resolute, their wits just as sharp, their will just as indomitable.

Mortals are kings, patrons, commoners, pirates, generals, wives, soldiers, and often many of these things at once. They can challenge Champions, teach Oracles, and humble Olympians. Someone who underestimates their tenacity risks losing everything.

HUNTER

Hunters were common in the ancient world. Hunts provided supplementary food to local populations and were often performed for sport for people from higher classes. Hunters are familiar with the local terrain and habits of the wildlife in the area.

Primary Pool: 6 (tracking, ranged weapons)
Secondary Pool: 4 (prowling, survival)
Desperation Pool: 2
Enhancement: 0
Defense: 3
Health: 3
Initiative: 2

SEA PEOPLE RAIDERS

Raiders terrorize the coasts of the Aegean. They ransack towns and villages and are so prevalent some of their victims rebuild farther away from the coastline to provide an extra layer of defense against invasion from the water.

The Sea People are not a unified culture: they are the desperate and dispossessed who have turned to piracy. They avoid combat unless they feel they have an advantage and flee to seek easier prey if the tide turns against them. Subjected to the horrors of war, famine, and disease, Sea People are slow to trust but consider the Atlantean imperial navy their primary threat. While not keen to pick a fight with Atlantis's superior technology and weapons, they would be a useful ally for anyone who considers the empire an enemy.

Primary Pool: 7 (piracy, navigating the Mediterranean, evaluating treasure)
Secondary Pool: 5 (finding targets, gossip)
Desperation Pool: 3
Enhancement: 1
Defense: 3
Health: 4
Initiative: 3
Edges: Breath Control, Demolitions Training, Fame, Sniper, Weak Spots

MERCENARIES

Professional bodyguards and soldiers employed by whoever has the need and the money. While citizen-soldiers are conscripted and unfamiliar with violence, mercenaries live it every day. They are skilled with all manner of weapons and can be counted on to enact their employer's will even in dangerous situations: a mercenary who cuts and runs at the first sign of trouble won't get repeat business, after all. Traveling adventurers and would-be heroes find mercenary work a natural fit for their skillset.

Primary Pool: 8 (violence, recognizing fellow professionals)
Secondary Pool: 6 (tracking, battlefield tactics)
Desperation Pool: 4
Enhancement: 2
Defense: 4
Health: 5
Initiative: 4
Edges: Armor Expert, Danger Sense, Forceful or Precise Martial Arts 2, Patron 1

ATLANTEAN SOLDIERS

Conquerors and raiders in the service of King Atlas III, Atlantean soldiers leap into battle wielding horrifying mystic weapons, clad in impenetrable golden armor, and possessed by an unending appetite for conquest. At the core of their being is a belief that the destiny of Atlantis is to rule the seas through the might of their spears.

Atlantis strictly controls the secrets of orichalcum technology and its soldiers are expected to make regular journeys home to recharge and repair their weapons and ships. They do not linger where they land, and they closely track their gear. Soldiers hunt down any missing equipment and kill anyone unwise enough to interfere.

Primary Pool: 8 (cruel tactics, boarding actions)
Secondary Pool: 6 (sailing, operating orichalcum devices)
Desperation Pool: 4
Enhancement: 2
Defense: 4
Health: 6
Edges: Danger Sense, Fast Draw, Precise Martial Arts (Spear) 1, Skirmisher, Small Unit Tactics 2

CHAMPIONS

The following are Champion-level antagonists.

THESEUS OF TROEZEN

Theseus was raised by his mother, Aethra, in the region of Troezen. He grew up believing that his

father had been claimed by Poseidon, dead in a shipwreck. When he was a young man, while exploring the shores of his home, he witnessed a falling star crash into the beach. From within the crater, he drew a length of sharp metal unlike anything he had ever seen, and felt a surge of divine purpose.

When he showed the blade to his mother, and told her that he intended to set out and make his name as a hero, she revealed to him that he was actually the son of Aegeus of Athens. Rather than shake his resolve, he decided that Athens would be his first destination, and set out on foot on the Saronic Gulf.

Primary Pool: 8 (combat, forced marches)
Secondary Pool: 6 (sailing, spelunking)
Desperation Pool: 4
Enhancement: 2
Defense: 4
Health: 5
Initiative: 5
Edges: Fast Draw, Precise Martial Arts 2, Striking
Source: Inspiration 4
Gifts: Anathema, Cutting Through the Knot, Infuriating Gibe, Vision of Argus

ATALANTA

Short, stocky, with sun-kissed bronze skin, and short-cut dark hair, Atalanta strikes the earth beneath her corded thews. Her legend has already spread throughout the north coasts of the Mediterranean. Some say that she was raised by bears and is favored by Artemis, others that she's a nymph who has taken human form to test the mettle of mortal hunters. Whatever the truth, she exhibits excellence and has bested everyone who has challenged her.

She plies her trade as a huntress, accompanied by her ursine companion Labros.

Primary Pool: 8 (physical contests, hunting)
Secondary Pool: 6 (furious strikes, commanding beasts)
Desperation Pool: 4
Enhancement: 2
Defense: 4
Health: 5
Initiative: 4
Edges: Direction Sense, Forceful Martial Arts 1, Sniper 1, Swift, Tough Cookie
Source: Inspiration 4

Gifts: Pentathlete, Taming Beasts & Monsters, Tireless Hunter, Wild Tongue

ORACLES

The following are Oracle-level antagonists.

CIRCE OF EA

The island of Ea is a nexus of ambrosia. It collects in and infuses the soil, the life that grows from it, and the springs that provide it with fresh water. The witch Circe rules this mythic place. She is also the sorceress Circe, who sprouts ambrosia from the soil. And she is the goddess Circe, daughter of Helios, who reshapes flesh with herbal brews and magical incantations.

To trespass upon Ea invites harsh retribution. No creature is safe from Circe's power: mortal sailors are transformed into swine, nymphs are transformed into terrible monsters, kings into birds. She is known for pettiness and jealousy, but also for mercy and honor. As a patron, she offers a chance to study ambrosia from the safety of her traveling domain, and her knowledge of potions and alchemy is second to none.

Despite her power, she is loath to leave Ea for too long, but there is much in the world that attracts her attention. Artifacts empowered by ambrosia are tremendously valuable to her, and she will favor anyone who can provide her with a steady supply.

Primary Pool: 10 (brewing potions, mystic presence)
Secondary Pool: 8 (cultivating alchemical reagents, wrath of the gods)
Enhancement: 5
Defense: 5
Health: 8
Initiative: 6
Edges: Animal Ken 2, Eureka!, Fame 3, Indomitable, Intense Focus
Source: Inspiration 6
Gifts: Balm of Healing, Fast Travel, Hyper Intelligent, The Food of Transformation, Vision of Panoptes, Voice of the Wild

ORPHEUS

Hermes invented the lyre, but Orpheus perfected it. A scholar, poet, and musician — perhaps *the* scholar, poet, and musician — Orpheus sailed on the *Argo* with Jason and the Argonauts and delivered the tale of that heroic crew to the world. He continues his travels not out of a desire to chase his own fame, but to improve his musical ability and expand his worldly knowledge.

Becoming an Oracle was not something he had planned on.

Ambrosia's blessing has improved his musical ability and given him great insight into the world. He sees the waves of sound as they dance through the air and understands how they stir the hearts of his listeners. Even Gaea listens: animals, plants, waves, stone, he sees how his songs affect the world itself.

But something flickers just out of sight. He hears whispers of a calamitous future. For him? For everyone? His naive wanderings have ended: now he journeys to find the answer to a burning question: what's going to happen next? And why does it fill him with dread?

Primary Pool: 8 (fingers blessed by Hermes, lips blessed by Apollo)
Secondary Pool: 6 (burning curiosity, ominous visions)
Desperation Pool: 4
Enhancement: 2
Defense: 4
Health: 5
Initiative: 4
Edges: Artistic Talent (musician), Big Hearted, Fame 3, Respected Authority
Source: Inspiration 4
Gifts: Charon, Carry my Voice, Chimeric Tongue, Speech Without Words, Split Paths

OLYMPIANS

The following are Olympian-level antagonists.

KING MIDAS

Is there a greater tragedy about the short-sighted greed of kings than the tale of King Midas? Who wished that all he touched would turn to gold and starved himself when his food and drink turned to gold with everything else?

Midas begged Dionysus to undo his wish, and washed the power of his boon-turned-curse into the Pactolus River. Unbeknownst to history, Midas retained his power, but it was weakened in exchange for control. Regardless, he rejected his wealth and dedicated himself to the god of fields and satyrs, Pan.

His troubles were not over, however. By chance he met a group of celebrants during a Dionysian festival and joined them. Three days later he awoke with the ears of a horse. He hides his mutation with a large headdress and hopes to cure himself of his affliction.

Primary Pool: 9 (impulsive decision-making, scholar of Orphic lore)

Secondary Pool: 7 (pan pipes, musical connoisseur, throwing parties)
Desperation Pool: 5
Enhancement: 4
Defense: 4
Health: 6
Initiative: 5
Edges: Fame 2, Striking, Wealth 3
Source: Inspiration 5
Gifts: Transmute (The Midas Touch)

The Midas Touch: Midas may spend 1 Source to transmute a creature or object that he touches up to Size Scale 0 into solid gold. This only affects what he is touching directly: clothes or weapons become gold if he doesn't touch a person's bare skin, subjecting the target to a Complication. The transformation is permanent, but can be undone. Submerging the subject in the waters of the Pactolus River or applying a salve made with ambrosia will transform them back, and Midas can reverse the effect by touching them and spending another Source. Theoretically, he could do this to other beings affected by a similar curse.

MESTRA, PRINCESS OF THESSALY

Daughter of King Erisichthon, Mestra was blessed by Poseidon with the ability to change shape. Her father tried to exploit her power for his own gain, marrying her to multiple suitors for the bride-price. She would transform and return, and the two repeated the scheme again and again, until Poseidon came and stole her away to the island of Cos.

Or so she would have her father believe. In truth, Mestra fled her father's abuse and exploitation for her own sake. She travels the Mediterranean, rarely wearing the same face for more than a few weeks. Her life is not as glamorous as it was before, but she has her freedom.

She steals and manipulates to maintain her livelihood, and has many enemies. Her reputation as a thief — known as Autolycus, "the wolf itself" — has spread beyond her travels.

Primary Pool: 8 (pretending to be others, finding secret passageways)
Secondary Pool: 6 (escaping from danger, confusing her attackers)
Desperation Pool: 4
Enhancement: 2
Defense: 4
Health: 5
Initiative: 4
Edges: Broad Knowledge, Covert 3, Hardy, Polyglot
Source: Inspiration 4
Gifts: Proteus' Gift, Put on the Beast's Shape (gull, fish)

TYPHON AND ECHIDNA'S BROOD

Here be dragons.

KĒTŎS

The environmental impact of ambrosia cannot be understated. As shockwaves from the sky chariot's crash spread through the Mediterranean, sea creatures nearby were affected much like people and animals on land. Debris scattered across the waters and bled ambrosia into the waves.

Kētŏs was a casualty of this indiscriminate rain of fire. A whale was near enough to the surface that the impact shockwave from a piece of debris rippled through its body, tearing muscle and breaking bones. Ambrosia knitted flesh and meat back together, but the animal's mind knew only pain and confusion. It rages and howls through the sea, an enormous instinctive mass of panic.

It no longer resembles a whale: it has grown half-again as long and bulked up considerably. It grew two more pairs of fins: a powerfully muscular set near its mouth with webbed, grasping claws, and another set near its midsection. What once were baleen plates are now sharp, bladed teeth that can mince any prey unfortunate enough to be drawn into its maw. Powerful enough to sink warships, Kētŏs is a legendary threat. In mythology, only the children of Zeus were strong enough to slay it.

Primary Pool: 10 (swimming, swallowing whole)
Secondary Pool: 8 (echolocation, whale speech)
Desperation Pool: 6
Enhancement: 5
Defense: 5
Health: 8
Initiative: 6
Edges: Adrenaline Spike, Breath Control, Indomitable, Keen Hearing, Tough Cookie
Source: 6
Powers: Enormous Size 2, Enhanced (Brutal), Extraordinary Speed, Natural Weapons

UŠUMGALLU

Cultures from the eastern Mediterranean recognize these armor-scaled, winged lions as children of Tiamat, legendary monsters reawakened by the sky chariot's crash. The name translates to Great

Dragon, and their power and ferocity is legendary.

Primary Pool: 9 (rampaging fury, terrifying cry)
Secondary Pool: 7 (twisting flight, protecting its lair)
Desperation Pool: 5
Enhancement: 4
Defense: 4
Health: 6
Initiative: 4
Edges: Tough Cookie
Source: 5
Powers: Flight, Hardened Skin, Natural Weapons (claws and fangs), Regeneration, Weak Spots

MINOAN BULL

Found mostly on the island of Crete, these bulls have been empowered by ambrosia with armor-like hides, horns like iron, massive wings, and a lust for violence.

Primary Pool: 9 (charging threats, bellowing warnings)
Secondary Pool: 7 (clumsy flight, irascible temper)
Desperation Pool: 5
Enhancement: 4
Defense: 4
Health: 6
Initiative: 5
Edges: Adrenaline Spike, Iron Will 2, Powerful Martial Arts, Skirmisher
Source: 5
Powers: Enhanced Attack (steel), Enormous Size, Flight, Hardened Skin 2, Natural Weapons (horns)

RUKH

Giant Persian birds of prey, their wingspan casts shadows over entire cities as they pass over the sun, such is their majesty. Powerful talons allow them to snatch unsuspecting prey from the ground, including goats, cattle, humans, and according to one sighting even an elephant.

Primary Pool: 8 (aerial superiority, carrying prey)
Secondary Pool: 6 (long range vision, swooping at enemies)

Desperation Pool: 4
Enhancement: 2
Defense: 4
Health: 5
Initiative: 4
Edges: Elusive Target 2, Direction Sense, Keen Sight, Swift
Source: 4
Powers: Enhanced Attack (grapple), Enormous Size 2, Flight, Natural Weapons (talons)

CYCLOPES

Forged by Hephaestus, cyclopes are enormous, one-eyed humanoids with an unholy drive to *experiment*. Their purpose is not petty cruelty, but the unknowable machinations of Hephaestus.

LESSER CYCLOPS

Cyclopes are varied and intended to pursue specific projects by Hephaestus, but they have many traits in common. Especially their capacity for violence.

Primary Pool: 8 (engineering, problem solving)
Secondary Pool: 6 (destroying things, recognizing patterns)
Desperation Pool: 4
Enhancement: 2
Defense: 4
Health: 5
Initiative: 4
Edges: Speed Reading, Forceful Martial Arts 1, Ms. Fix It, Striking
Powers: Enhanced Attack (grapple, reach), Enormous Size, Hardened Skin

BRONTES

Brontes maintains an indomitable loyalty to Hephaestus. He manages the workshops and other cyclopes with icy, ironclad devotion. He rarely needs to pick up any of his oversized tools when dealing with intruders — he manages just fine with his enormous hands. While his unflappable composure gives way to bellowing rage during a fight, he doesn't lose his ineffable intelligence.

Primary Pool: 9 (managing projects, ejecting intruders)
Secondary Pool: 7 (improvised weapons, obeying commands, measured responses)
Enhancement: 4
Defense: 4
Health: 6
Initiative: 5
Edges: Speed Reading, Forceful Martial Arts 1, Iron Will 1, Ms. Fix It, Striking
Source: Inspiration 5
Gifts: Enormous Size, Hyper Intelligent, Inspired
Powers: Irons in the Fire, Warrior's Eye

Note: Brontes uses his Enhancement in place of Facets for Irons in the Fire and Warrior's Eye.

SATYRS

Satyrs are reveling cultists who imbibe wine mixed with ambrosia. While many become inhuman and feral after repeated use, some maintain their sense of humanity and become defenders of their communities. Satyrs are essentially human, though the ambrosia cocktails have altered their physiology. Usually they manifest bestial traits: fur, horns, tails, animalistic facial features, even enhanced senses. The most common depiction of satyrs is of a human with horse ears and a tail, though some resemble the god Pan with goat horns and bipedal, hoofed, furred, digitigrade legs.

CELEBRANT OF DIONYSUS

Many satyrs already eschewed polite society and held raucous parties in the wild parts of the world, away from prying eyes and nosy neighbors. Some were unlucky enough to be altered by their experiences, potentially permanently.

Primary Pool: 6 (revelry, lovely singing voice)
Secondary Pool: 4 (establishing new friendships, alchemy)
Desperation Pool: 2
Defense: 4
Health: 3
Initiative: 2
Edges: Big Hearted, Hardy
Source: Inspiration 2
Powers: Heightened Reflexes

HILAROS, PRIEST TO PAN

A wealthy merchant who used his earnings to secretly fund cult gatherings dedicated to Pan, massive sacrifices of dignity and composure in the name of the satyr god. Hilaros introduced his fellow cultists to their first taste of ambrosia-watered-wine, and he considers the resulting transformation a sign of Pan's favor.

He now drives his cult to aggressively seek ambrosia to be used in ever-grander celebrations. While he has changed too dramatically to casually stroll through the agora, he maintains his wealth, his connections, and his loyal subjects. Visions of hedonism

fill his dreams and he works toward a world of unending revelry.

Primary Pool: 8 (organizing secret meetings, managing mercantile networks, impassioned speech)
Secondary Pool: 6 (leading the faithful, connoisseur)
Desperation Pool: 4
Enhancement: 2
Defense: 5
Initiative: 4
Health: 5
Edges: Covert 1, Hardy, Wealth 4
Source: Inspiration 4
Gifts: Potion of Connection, The Vapor of Psyche
Powers: Enhanced Attack (pushing), Heightened Reflexes, Natural Weapons (horns)

CHIMERAE

The most famous example of a chimera in the Aegean Sea is one of the monstrous offspring of Typhon and Echidna, a fire-breathing terror with the body of a lion, a goat's head sprouting from its back between its shoulder blades, and a tail that ended in a snake's head. The Hittites had their own version of such a creature, a winged lioness with the head of a human sprouting from her shoulders instead of a goat's.

But chimera is a blanket term that applies to any amalgam of multiple creatures combined into one. In this age of monsters, they could appear randomly as multiple animals are accidentally exposed to ambrosia at the same time. Most of the time, however, they are created by an external force: Echidna in the Nightmare Cradle (see p. XX), characters using super-science, or biological weapons of war "commissioned" by kings and warlords.

THE CHIMERA

The ur-example, this chimera breathes flame and spits venom from its snake-headed tail. One of Echidna's earliest projects, she let it loose on the world to sate its unending appetite for chaos.

Primary Pool: 8 (indiscriminate destruction, horrific design)

Secondary Pool: 6 (hunting, intimidation)
Desperation Pool: 4
Enhancement: 2
Defense: 4
Health: 5
Initiative: 4
Edges: Danger Sense, Free Runner 2, Hair Trigger Reflexes, Keen Sight, Skirmisher
Source: Inspiration 4
Powers: Enhanced Attack (reach), Flame Breath, Multi-limbed, Natural Weapons (claws, fangs, horns)

Flame Breath: The Chimera can exhale a cone of flame from any of its three mouths, surrounding itself with a circle of fire or incinerating everything in a single direction. By spending a Source, it may either create a Field of fire around itself with a damage rating of 1 and the Aggravated and Continuous (round) tags (it is immune to its own flames), or make an attack against a single target with the Aggravated and Incendiary tags.

SERPOPARD

Serpopards originated in the lands of the southeast Mediterranean, seemingly at random. They have a simpler body plan than many chimerae, only displaying the features of two animals. They have the head and body of a lioness and a long, scaled neck like a snake. They've been made the subject of experimentation and study. Hunters harvest their fangs, pelts, and venom, and patrons offer enormous rewards to any who can capture and break them to be added to their menageries.

Primary Pool: 7 (creeping low, constricting)
Secondary Pool: 5 (basking, sudden strikes)
Desperation Pool: 3
Enhancement: 1
Defense: 3
Health: 4
Initiative: 3
Edges: Free Running 2, Precise Martial Arts 3
Source: Inspiration 3
Powers: Envenomed Fangs, Natural Attacks (fangs, claws), Spitter

STRANGE WONDERS

Fragments of the sky chariot fell from the sky, but not all of them disintegrated. While no riders seemed to survive, some of the mechanisms that adorned it remained intact and operational. These intriguing devices behave erratically as they attempt to fulfill their duties.

Whenever possible, Hephaestus retrieves these lost machines to repair or scrap for parts.

GEGENES

Lumbering constructs named after the six-armed giants who fought Jason and the Argonauts, the gegenes are squat and boxy constructs with a glassy dome atop of their bodies. They move about on multiple legs or treads and manipulate their environment with up to six articulated arms. They grab seemingly random objects and store them in a large cavity in their bodies. When full, they return to a home base and deposit their spoils. Gegenes aren't picky, grabbing junk, driftwood, plants, animals, treasure, and even people. A person trapped in the cavity could survive, but the gegenes err on the side of too much and do not care if their targets are crushed.

Primary Pool: 8 (grabbing targets, surveying the landscape)
Secondary Pool: 6 (moving heavy objects, tearing through barriers)
Desperation Pool: 4
Enhancement: 2
Defense: 4
Health: 5
Edges: Lightning Calculator, Photographic Memory 3
Powers: Enormous Size 2, Entrap, Multi-limbed, Unliving

BENNU

An arrowhead-shaped blade of metal that can hover, land, and jet around at impossible speeds, the first sightings of these automated drones came from Kmt and referred to them by the name of Ra's avian familiar. While they typically fly too high for even the most skilled archer to strike, sometimes they drop down to examine or attack something close. They only have two modes of attack: flying directly at their target to impale it, or a beam of light that scorches and burns whatever it touches. Their attention is considered an ill omen.

Primary Pool: 8 (fast flying, high-altitude scouting)
Secondary Pool: 6 (laser targeting system)
Desperation Pool: 4
Enhancement: 2
Defense: 4

Health: 5
Initiative: 4
Edges: Direction Sense, Elusive Target 3
Source: Inspiration 4
Powers: Eyes of Fire, Flying, Natural Weapons (blade-like body), Unliving

KIMMERIOI

Rumors spread from the eastern steppes, from the land of Scythia, that something malevolent fell from the stars. Something indomitable, coated in starmetal, has slain all witnesses. Such rumors were treated as superstition or the ramblings of ambrosia-addled minds, but soon the reality made itself known.

Standing six cubits tall, wide as a stallion, and gleaming like silver, these implacable, silent soldiers march with measured strides, interrupting their perfect forward momentum only to destroy anything they deem a threat. When they spot a target, they break into a full tilt sprint and charge faster than a lion at the offender. They are heedless of the pleas of their victims, and anyone nearby is guilty by association. Sometimes they lie in wait to ambush unlucky explorers.

Primary Pool: 10 (calculating attack patterns, breaking weapons)
Secondary Pool: 8 (missile trajectories, feats of strength)
Enhancement: 5
Defense: 6
Health: 8
Initiative: 6
Edges: Lightning Calculator, Ms. Fix It, Photographic Memory 2, Speed Reading, Swift
Source: Inspiration 6
Powers: Hardened Skin, Heightened Reflexes, Hyper Intelligent, Natural Weapons (metal fists), Unliving, Unnatural Sense (thermal vision)

WILD ANIMALS

Most animals avoid conflict and only attack people if they're starving, injured, or cornered. However, being near ambrosia can influence animals and make them confused and aggressive. Gifts can also be used to command animals to attack or defend despite their natural instincts.

The following entries are for typical members of animal species. Ambrosia's mutating effects may enlarge or strengthen wild animals, and creatures resembling the mighty animals of myth are the result. To represent this, increase the animal's tier to Moderate or Major Threat and add one or two Size Scale. Empowered animals rarely acquire powers that radically alter their natures, though a lion that can slip into the shadows as if it were invisible would be an appropriately subtle change.

BOAR

Feral hogs with enormous tusks and thick hide, boars are widespread and associated with warrior virtues. Boars are hunted for game and to prove the hunter's mettle and self-sufficiency. Boar attacks feature commonly in folklore and tall tales: slaying a wild boar is seen as a heroic feat.

Primary Pool: 6 (goring, grazing)
Secondary Pool: 3 (swimming)
Desperation Pool: 2
Defense: 3
Health: 3
Initiative: 2
Edges: Adrenaline Spike, Tough Cookie
Powers: Enhanced Attack (lethal), Hardy, Natural Weapons (Tusks)

CROCODILE

Occasionally traded around the Mediterranean as curiosities for the wealthy and irresponsible, crocodiles are ambush predators that attack prey at the water's edge with their impossibly strong jaws. They drag their victims into the water and perform a "death roll," which kills the prey. While faster than a human on land, they typically only use this speed to run away from danger rather than pursuing prey.

Primary Pool: 6 (chomping, pretending to be logs)
Secondary Pool: 4 (maintaining a grapple, digging in mud)
Desperation Pool: 2
Enhancement: +2 on damaging grappled targets underwater
Defense: 3
Health: 3
Initiative: 2
Edges: Breath Control, Hair Trigger Reflexes, Swift
Powers: Hardened Skin, Natural Weapons

LION

Associated with war gods of Kmt and dangerous predators in their own right, lions are glorified in mythology in part due to their impressive appearance and their violent interactions with humanity.

Lions avoid humans, if possible, but when driven to hunger are known to skulk into camps at night and drag them away into the night to be devoured.

Primary Pool: 7 (skulking through the tall grass, ambushing prey, catlike agility)
Secondary Pool: 5 (batting with claws, impressive roar)
Desperation Pool: 3
Enhancement: 1
Defense: 4
Health: 4
Initiative: 3
Edges: Free Running 3, Striking
Powers: Enhanced Attack (lethal), Heightened Reflexes, Natural Attack (claws and fangs)

KRI-KRI

Feral goats that can be found all over the Aegean, kri-kri are often called agrimi, "the wild ones." They're associated with Pan, god of satyrs, the wild, and folk music. Goats are also often used as sacrificial offerings to the gods.

Primary Pool: 6 (leaping, climbing seemingly sheer cliffs, defensive headbutt)
Secondary Pool: 4 (sprinting away from harm)
Desperation Pool: 2
Defense: 3
Health: 3
Initiative: 2
Edges: Danger Sense, Free Running 3
Powers: Enhanced Attack (pushing), Natural Weapons (horns)

SHARK

Drawn to blood in the water, a hungry shark will attack the living and the dead.

Primary Pool: 7 (tracking prey, biting)
Secondary Pool: 5 (surge of speed, shaking off grapplers)
Desperation Pool: 3
Enhancement: 1
Defense: 3
Health: 4
Initiative: 3
Edges: Adrenaline Surge, Keen Smell and Taste, Skirmisher
Powers: Natural Weapons (teeth), Unnatural Sense (electromagnetic currents)

Note: Feeding Frenzies — Sharks are normally solitary predators, but become competitive if other sharks appear when they're attempting to catch injured prey. If there are multiple sharks nearby, they become aggressive and will begin attacking the most injured target available to them. Add +1 Scale to their attacks and +1 Difficulty to frighten the shark away.

FOLLOWERS

Many heroes are known not just for their personal acumen, but for their ability to lead troops, rally comrades, strike bargains, and muster allies. Jason had his Argonauts, Odysseus led a whole crew on a voyage home, Helen's face launched a thousand ships. Additionally, some myths tell of significant allies — sidekicks, really — that assisted heroes on their journeys. The Storyguide could portray these allies using the rules for supporting characters, but that could lead to situations where the Storyguide is rolling against themselves.

Instead, **Aegis** uses Follower Sheets to represent allied characters controlled by the players. These could be mercenary hirelings or godly servants, but could also be oracles, expert navigators, quartermasters, intelligent mounts, or any other friendly retainer. Players can share Followers with each other, keeping them for scenes where it doesn't make sense for their primary character to be present, or they can maintain personal "stables" of Followers.

Follower Sheets are simplified versions of full characters sheets — a halfway point between antagonist mechanics and player character mechanics. Follower Sheets present enough information to understand what a Follower is best at so the players know how to utilize them and context to explain why the Follower is present: what's keeping the Follower around, and how might that contribute to the story?

FOLLOWER TRAITS

Followers have several traits that are similar to those possessed by player characters in addition to unique traits that simplify what is found in **Trinity Continuum**. Players roll for Followers using the mechanics found on the Follower sheet whenever the Followers perform actions.

SKILLS

Followers have six Skills that range from zero to five, just like characters. These Skills relate to but aren't directly mapped to the same Skills available to characters.

Athletics: Physical actions outside of combat, such as running, jumping, swimming, and climbing. The physical aspect of sailing and traveling long distances involve Athletics.

Attack: Any attack made to deal damage including attacks made with bare fists, natural weapons, any melee or ranged weapon, or even weapons systems like catapults, sea fire, or the strange lightning weapons found in mysterious ruins.

Charisma: Convincing other characters, lying, haggling, rallying or playing to crowd, or delivering a stellar performance in a tragedy at the theatre would all use Charisma.

Lore: Research, solving mysteries, decrypting puzzles, and knowledge of culture, philosophy, mythology, history, and family lines all qualify under Lore.

Stealth: Stealth covers going unseen, unheard, and unnoticed, picking locks, eavesdropping, reading lips, any sort of skulduggery.

Survival: Navigating using the stars or landmarks, finding food in the wild, fishing, foraging, tracking prey, and crafting ammunition or simple weapons all use Survival.

ENHANCEMENTS

To further diversify Skills, Followers have Enhancements. Enhancements range from +1 to +3. These provide their value in Enhancement to any roll if the action is related. For example, a Follower may have a Ballistic Weapons or Swords Enhancement. The Follower would gain the levels in either as Enhancement when attacking with a Bow or Sword when attacking, but would also gain the Enhancement if using Lore to research famous archers or Charisma if selling a sword duel to an audience. Like character Specialties, Follower Enhancements could be anything that represents a narrow focus of expertise.

APPROACHES

While characters have nine attributes, Followers only use three Approaches: Force, Finesse, and Resilience. These range from one to five dots, like normal Attributers, and describe how the Follower is acting (most Followers roll Skill + an appropriate Approach).

Force: Force represents direct action. Use Force when the Follower is taking control of a situation, expressing herself bluntly, or when power matters over substance.

Finesse: Finesse represents fine or covert action. Use Finesse when the Follower is acting with care, using quick thinking, manipulating a situation, or when style matters over effect.

Resilience: Resilience represents focused action. Use Resilience when the Follower is acting despite adversity, strategizing an action, withstanding an onslaught, or when assessment is more important than action.

PATHS

Followers have Paths just like characters in **Aegis**. Unlike characters, Followers have only two Paths. These Paths define the Follower's concept and their relationship to a character or the party.

Also, unlike character Paths, Follower Paths are not rated. Their Relationship Path doesn't provide Access or Contacts, instead describing the reason the Follower is with the characters and the conditions that might make them leave. They can use their Concept Path for Access and Contacts on behalf of the characters.

Concept Path: This is the Follower's aesthetic, background, and general description. It's a single phrase or statement that sums up who they are and

CONDITION: STRAINED FOLLOWER

You've pushed your Follower too much, and now they're reconsidering this whole arrangement. Is what you're offering worth putting up with what you're asking of them? Could somebody else provide what they need instead? You suffer a +2 Complication whenever your Strained Follower assists you. If you do not buy it off, they will refuse to assist you for the rest of the scene. If you attempt to access your Follower's connections again or otherwise violate their trust, they will abandon you at the end of the game session. Additionally, the Follower doesn't gain Experience while Strained: the stress and awkwardness of the relationship makes it difficult to self-reflect.

Resolution: Your Follower demands to be appeased. Either they demand payment, a favor, or some other action performed on their behalf that they could not do themselves. If you don't fulfill their demands within a reasonable timeframe, they abandon you at the end of the game session. If you do, or at least make a good faith effort to do so, the Condition is removed.

DON'T LET FOLLOWERS OVERSHADOW THE PLAYER CHARACTERS

The player characters are the protagonists. Followers are part of their story, not the other way around.

what they're good at, most comparable to a character's Role Path. A Follower's Concept Path has two associated Skills and an Enhancement, as well as their Access and Contact. Since Follower Paths are not rated, characters may only draw on Follower's Connections once. If they attempt to do it again before the end of the Session, they suffer the Suspended Condition (**Trinity Continuum Core,** p.41.) If the character attempts to draw on the Follower's Path again, instead of the Path being revoked their relationship to the Follower becomes Strained.

Relationship Path: This Path represents the deal or arrangement that the Follower has with the character or characters. It does not have Connections but can be used to push the Follower during stressful or intense moments. Whenever a Follower faces something horrifying or suffers a near-death experience, the character they are associated with fails to provide them with upkeep or treats them poorly, or the character draws on their Concept Path too often, they become Suspended, or Strained if they are already Suspended.

ASPIRATIONS

Followers have their own internal lives and desires, and seek to fulfill those desires. That's why they're traveling with the characters in the first place. Unlike the Aspirations a player chooses for their character, a Follower's Aspirations represent their goals and agenda. If the players want to see story moments involving the Follower, they should craft their characters' Aspirations with those goals in mind.

The guidelines for character Aspirations still hold true for Followers. They should push action, not restrict it, phrased as something to do rather than something not to do. "Find a cure for my husband's plague," "Solve the riddle of the Sphinx," and "Reverse engineer the artifact" are all actionable goals that can be worked toward.

All Followers have two Aspirations: one short-term and one long-term. If players need help coming up with new Aspirations, they should look to the Follower's Paths for inspiration and direction.

FOLLOWER EDGES, GIFTS, AND POWERS

Followers can take character Edges as well as antagonist Edges, but they can also take Follower-specific Edges (see **Follower-Only Edges**, p. XX). Followers may also take Gifts from the same list as characters if they qualify, or Anomaly Powers available to antagonists. Followers may spend Source to pay for the activation cost of any Edge or Gift in place of the listed cost, such as Momentum or Inspiration. Additionally, players may spend Momentum on behalf of the Followers.

OTHER TRAITS

Followers also have Health, Defense, and Initiative. Like antagonists, when Followers take damage, they fill a Health Box and are Taken Out when their last

OPTION: INJURY CONDITIONS FOR FOLLOWERS

Managing Injury Conditions for characters and potentially multiple Followers more than doubles the amount to keep track of, but some groups may find the use of Health Boxes unsatisfying.

If that is the case, consider giving Followers a single Persistent Injury Condition if they're Taken Out and reduce their Health Boxes by 1 until they heal the Injury Condition.

WHAT HAVE I BECOME?

If a Follower experiences a Moment of Inspiration or becomes a monster during play, they gain the Source with a rating of one and one free Gift or Power appropriate to their metamorphosis.

Health Box is filled. They have three Health Boxes plus one if they have three Resilience and plus another if they have five. If they have Scale for Size, Durability, or anything resembling toughness they receive one more. Followers may not have more than six Health Boxes.

Their Defense starts at one like characters, but they have a Defense pool equal to Athletics (if dodging) or Attack (if blocking) + their lowest Approach. Enhancement from Equipment may apply, but Enhancement from weapons may not apply unless they specify otherwise. If attacked, they roll to Defend the same as players.

Follower Initiative is equal to the lower of Athletics + Finesse or Survival + Finesse.

SOURCE

Some Followers may have a Source rating. The rating determines how many Source points they can spend in a session and is rated from 1 to 5. Some Follower Edges may allow them to use their Source rating as Enhancement or a dice pool. Any effect the Follower is subjected to that references Inspiration references the Follower's Source instead.

SPENDING SOURCE

Followers can spend Source like characters spend Inspiration, though they may not spend more than one Source per turn. They can achieve any one of the following effects.

Activate Powers and Gifts — Many Powers and Gifts require the Follower to spend a Source.

Enhanced Defense — The Follower may spend a point of Source to gain a bonus to their Defense equal to their lowest-rated Approach.

Extraordinary Effort — As characters, **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook** p. 153.

REGAINING SOURCE

Source is a limited resource and once spent doesn't return immediately. Followers automatically start every session with a full Source pool, and regain spent Source during sessions in the same ways that characters may regain Inspiration (see **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook** p. 154).

EQUIPMENT

Characters can track their Followers' gear just like their own, but not every group will find that satisfying. Instead, Equipment can be denoted as a form of Enhancement that applies whenever the gear they're using would apply to the action they're performing. For instance, a Hittite mercenary wielding a steel spear would record it as "Steel Spear (Attack +1)" and gain the Enhancement whenever they attack with the spear (Attack + Force) or use it to assist them while climbing (Athletics + Resilience).

If the players track the Followers' armor as normal equipment, add Hard Armor as a bonus to their Defense roll, and Soft Armor as additional Health. Armor Enhancements apply to their Defense.

FOLLOWER CREATION

The players or Storyguide may decide to incorporate Followers into their chronicles from the beginning, or the group may form a connection with a favorite SGC, or a new character might seek out the characters for assistance as their reputations rise. Whatever the reason, creating a new Follower sheet is a simple process.

MAKING A NEW FOLLOWER

Begin by establishing the Follower's Concept and Relationship Paths and their long-term Aspiration. Choose two Follower Skills for their Concept Path and determine their Connections. If the characters are new, distribute six dots to the Follower's Skills, and choose a +1 Enhancement for each Skill. If a Skill is at 5, it gains an additional +1 Enhancement, or may increase an existing one to +2.

Example: *The Storyguide distributes 5 dots to Calliope's Lore and 1 dot to Survival. Calliope*

OBJECT	CHANGE	COST
Approach	Add one dot to a single Approach	10 Experience
Edge	Add one dot to a new or existing Edge	3 Experience
Enhanced Edge	Gain a new Enhanced Edge	6 Experience
Skill	Add one dot in a new or existing Skill	5 Experience
Enhancement	Add one dot to a new or existing Enhancement	3 Experience
Gift	Purchase a new Gift	5 Experience
Power	Purchase a new Power	5 Experience
Source	Add one dot to Source	10 Experience

receives +1 Enhancement for Ancient Legends and +1 Enhancement for Recent Battles. Because her Lore is at 5 dots, the Storyguide chooses to increase the Ancient Legends Enhancement to +2.

Distribute seven dots to the Follower's Approaches. A Follower with five in one Approach and one in the other two could be an interesting figure to portray, and could explain why they need the assistance of the characters. Decide if the Follower is Inspired. If they are, they begin with a Source rating of 1 and one qualifying Gift or Power. They may spend four dots in Edges. Spend two Edge dots to start with an extra Gift or a Power, or three Edge dots to start with a second dot of Source.

Example: *The players decide that the Mycenean politician who joined them in their journey to Kmt is not Inspired, and they give him Highborn, Polyglot, Wealth, and Wingman Edges. However, Chloe, a sculptor from Thessaly who also joined them, is a Champion. She begins with Source 1, the Gift In the Model of Prometheus, the Power Unnatural Sense (Darkness), and the antagonist Edge Eureka!*

Followers receive any equipment that makes sense for them to have, just like characters.

FOLLOWER ADVANCEMENT

Followers track the accrual of Experience by achieving Aspirations and receive the same amount of Experience as characters (see **Trinity Continuum Core Rulebook** p. 39). They also receive Group Experience if they participated in the session in a meaningful way. Finally, if a Follower is the subject of an Aspiration achieved by a character, they earn one Experience.

Example: *Markos, a player character, achieved an Aspiration "Study Chloe's methods" during the session. Markos and Chloe both earn one Experience.*

Since Followers have different traits than characters, their Experience costs are different as well.

RETIRING FOLLOWERS

Followers could stay with the characters for their entire chronicle, but ultimately, they are an ephemeral aspect of the characters' stories. Even if the Follower survives the trials and threats arranged against the characters, they may wish to leave at some point — especially if the characters do not properly appreciate their worth.

Players need not spend Experience to attract Followers because of the fleeting nature of their relationship to the characters. The benefits of a boon companion and confidant should be clear while they're present in the story, and their assistance should help the characters accomplish their objectives: their victories are shared.

EXAMPLES

These are example Followers for use in your game.

ARGONAUT

Argonauts are veteran soldiers who sailed with Jason aboard his ship, the *Argo*. This companion has already lived through horrors that would make ordinary mortals flee, but their unwavering dedication and surety of arms buoys their confidence.

Argonauts who continue to adventure need a compelling reason. Perhaps they haven't lost the sense of wanderlust, or the appearance of ambrosia has forced them to take up arms again. These companions have a strong sense of their own value, and won't join a crew that they don't respect or who doesn't respect them.

Skills: Athletics 2, Attack 2, Stealth 2
Enhancements: Shields +1, Spears +1, Well-Traveled +1
Approaches: Force 2, Finesse 2, Resilience 3
Paths: Experienced Sailor of the Aegean, One Last Favor
Health: 4
Initiative: 2
Defense: Block 4, Dodge 4
Equipment: Javelins, Polished Spear +2 and Shield +2, Linothorax Breastplate +1
Edges: Breath Control, I May Know Someone Else Who Could Help, Phalanx, Precise Martial Arts 1

ATHENIAN BRONZE OWL

These owls were constructed by a group of Order of Themis Oracles who peered into the future for inspiration for new design. They were intended to serve as infallibly loyal scouts and infiltrators, flying over barriers and retrieving small items such as keys and documents. They are more willful than the creators intended, and demand regular appeasement in the form of new knowledge or secrets. If their needs are not met, they will depart to find someone else who can sate their curiosity.

The Order loans them to adventurers and travelers they trust or field agents on assignment. They are knowledgeable but distractible, well-spoken but fast talkers. They are not especially useful in combat, but can harry or distract targets to provide a fleeting advantage.

Skills: Athletics 1, Lore 3, Survival 2
Enhancements: Distracting +1, Flying +1, Broad Knowledge +1
Approaches: Force 1, Finesse 4, Resilience 2
Paths: Flying Symbol of Wisdom and Knowledge, On Loan from the Order of Themis
Health: 3
Initiative: 5
Defense: Dodge 2, Block 1
Edges: Eye of Artemis, Flight, Natural Weapons (Talons of Bronze)

ßApprentice Playwright

A young, starry-eyed student of the theatre, eagerly volunteers to journey with potential heroes to immortalize on the stage. Their youthful exuberance and sheltered upbringing can be grating, but they idolize the characters and always have their backs in a social situation. Their acting on the stage may be overwrought but they're surprisingly smooth in real situations.

Skills: Charisma 3, Lore 2, Survival 1
Enhancements: A Poem For Every Occasion +1, Winning Smile +2
Approaches: Force 5, Finesse 1, Resilience 1
Paths: Future Master of the Stage, Love at First Sight
Health: 3
Initiative: 1
Defense: Block 1, Dodge 1
Equipment: Expensive Clothes +2, The Manuscript +1
Edges: Always Around When You Need Them, Wealth 2, Wingman

MISTHIOS

Their loyalty is solid until the first missed paycheck. A typical Misthios is taciturn, stone-faced, and almost half-again as tall as anyone else on the ship, with perfectly fitted armor and well-oiled weapons bristling everywhere. They were hired for their people skills: specifically how they solve people problems with violence. It's unsettling how little bloodshed bothers them.

Skills: Athletics 2, Attack 3, Charisma 1
Enhancements: Accountable Accounting +1, Measured Applications of Violence +2
Approaches: Force 3, Finesse 2, Resilience 2
Paths: Hired Muscle, Contractually Obligated to Care
Health: 4
Initiative: 2
Defense: Block 5, Dodge 5
Equipment: Quality Spears, Bows, and Swords +2, Bronze Helmet and Breastplate +3
Edges: Always Prepared, Enormous Size, Long Enough Lever

APPENDIX

SETTING SECRETS

> Time and space heal themselves up around them and people simply remember a version of events which makes as much sense as they require it to make.
> — Douglas Adams

This chapter delves into **Trinity Continuum: Aegis'** mysteries, including what happened the night the sky chariot fell and its origins. If you're not a Storyguide, you might want to turn away from this section to avoid being spoiled on some of your game's big reveals.

A Brief History of the Future

In the early 1920s — 3000 years from the time of **Aegis** — Dr. Sir Calvin Hammersmith created a device he dubbed his Telluric Engine. The machine, intended to harness the strange fluctuating energies Hammersmith had observed, exploded during its inaugural demonstration, killing Hammersmith and bathing guests in a burst of the very energies Hammersmith was attempting to control. The blast affected sources of that energy across the globe, and in its aftermath, many Inspired humans discovered their newfound potential. While they weren't the first Inspired people in history, this was the first time such a phenomenon was observed on a worldwide scale.

The massive amounts of energy expended during the Hammersmith event flooded the world with quantum and psi particles. This drew the attention of a ruthless psionic alien species, the Doyen, who placed a barrier around the Earth that would contain those energies — and limit the potential for Inspired humans and their abilities — for nearly 100 years. In 2018 another explosion — this time that of the space station *Galatea* — shattered that barrier and gave rise to a new era of Inspired humans.

In the wake of the Hammersmith event, and shaped by some of the era's most famous Inspired individuals, the Æon Society formed with a mission toward protecting the future and making the world a better place. The organization would go through several iterations, evolving with the times and reacting to new threats and challenges over not just decades or centuries, but millennia.

During that time, humanity grappled with the complex questions that came with Inspired individuals' rise, not always peacefully — for a decade in the 21st century, the Aberrant Wars engulfed the world. However, baseline humans and powered individuals also worked together to take the first steps beyond the planet, establishing bases on Luna and Mars and setting up colonies on extrasolar worlds. Their exploration also brought contact with other alien species, letting the citizens of Earth know they weren't alone in the galaxy.

In the far future, the massive space station AEON is one reminder of the Æon Society's legacy. The inciting event that sent it — or parts of it — hurtling back in time is currently unknown.

The Crash of the Aeon

On a warm night several thousand years before, in the early years of Greece's Bronze Age collapse, fiery streaks lit the skies. While the largest of them tore across the heavens over Greece and the Mediterranean, similar instances were also recorded in scholarly observations and artists' renditions throughout the world. Observers' reactions varied widely: astronomers and scientists believed some celestial body had fallen from its place in the sky; priests and holy people attributed it to a god's wrath or distress; soothsayers saw omens in the way it fell; doomcryers warned of the world's imminent end. Ordinary people reacted with awe and fear, curiosity, and hope.

In truth, they all bore witness to pieces of a starship from the far future as it broke up in the Earth's atmosphere. What granted mortals godlike powers wasn't of divine nature, but was instead technology that wouldn't be created for millennia.

Whatever caused the explosion in the AEON's original time catapulted parts of the it through time instead of space, hurtling pieces back to the start of Greece's Dark Age. The ship broke into dozens of fragments as it fell, which now lie scattered throughout much of the Mediterranean region and across the world. Luckily for not only the ancient world, but for all life on Earth, these pieces are only a fraction of a much larger whole — had the entirety of the AEON been flung at the planet, its impact could have been disastrous.

Explorers who discovered the scattered remains of the crash on Mount Olympus saw the ship's markings, misreading them as "ΛEON," or "leon," the Greek word for "lion."

AMBROSIA

The AEON was equipped with repair nanites capable of fixing not only damage to the ship, but also the bodies of those who lived aboard. The nanites leaked from the broken hull as the ship's pieces tumbled and burned, in some places collecting in pools, in others descending to the ground like a golden mist. When the AEON's engine's crashed, the explosion produced its own variation of the Hammersmith event, unleashing a flood of Psi and Quantum energies across parts of the world. Once the curious locals of this era discovered the pools, the changes the nanites wrought in them allowed them to access those energies. Calling it *ambrosia,* after the mystical substance the Greek gods imbibed, they learned the liquid in the pools granted them astonishing powers. Still programmed to repair, even without a ship to work on, nanites reconstructed the people and animals they encountered, sometimes into Champions, Oracles, and Olympians, and sometimes into nightmarish combinations of humans *and* animals.

The word "ambrosia" derives from the Greek "ἀμβροσία," meaning immortality. The humans of this age think of the golden fluid as the source of the gods' longevity and many of their powers. It restored youth to Penelope. Achilles' mother dipped him in it, making him invulnerable everywhere but the heel that wasn't coated. Stealing it from the gods with the intention to let mortals partake is what got Tantalus eternally punished.

While the substance that leaked from the AEON was firmly based in advanced scientific principles, the comparison to the divine delicacy is fair. Though the nanites' original purpose was to repair the ship as needed, the AEON suffered such damage that the ambrosia recognized the futility of expending energy on repairs and went dormant, albeit still in emergency mode. Contact with it transformed many locals into Inspired individuals, as well as chimeras (p. XX). The nanites' programming, while tuned to human parameters, also looked for the energies present in many of the AEON's original inhabitants. Therefore, when the ambrosia came into contact with humans in the **Aegis** era, it detected people with similar readings to those of its charges, triggering Inspiration in many. In some cases, the genetic therapy successfully rewrote the subject's genes, but their bodies couldn't properly process flux energies. In others, their genes simply couldn't be safely edited. Ambrosia is an emergency tool, and genetic manipulation is challenging, particularly when the patients were born thousands of years before DNA databases existed. However, like the divine substance from which it's named, it *did* restore the injured to health, and some of the Inspired heroes who imbibed it found themselves imbued with some measure of invulnerability, among countless other new abilities.

Ambrosia isn't designed to limit the amount of power that someone can receive; it primarily preserves life. Additional exposures to ambrosia will not kill patients. Indeed, those regularly consuming

A LINGUISTIC NOTE

In our world, Archaic Greek developed from Phoenician letter forms somewhere around 750 BCE, several centuries after the setting of Aegis. Even then, the modern lambda symbol (**Λ**) took some time to develop. Ironically, the earlier Phoenician lāmed looks much closer to the modern L.

All this to say: realistically, literate Bronze Age Greeks almost certainly would not have seen "lion" from the letterforms of the AEON's wreckage, at least not for a few hundred more years.

The Trinity Continuum is full of scientific and historical "cheats" to help tell a fun story. We're already rewriting history. We hope you can join us, and not sweat the details if they get in the way.

ambrosia feel fantastic, the restorative fluid repairing their bodies repeatedly without further benefits. While ambrosia can restore abilities to someone who has lost theirs, it cannot grant additional abilities. The nanites don't cease reconstructing patients' bodies because they run out of energy; they stop because they no longer detect damage they need to heal or potential in need of unlocking. As much as some locals might wish it were true, drinking ambrosia every day will do little to elevate their Gifts.

Of course, repairing damage and granting Gifts are only one side of ambrosia's metaphorical coin. The other is much darker.

HAZARDOUS USES

Ambrosia causes two additional physiological phenomena: resurrection and chimeras, which often overlap. Its use and effect on those who see it as an avenue to acquire power has other potentially disastrous consequences as well.

THE LIVING DEAD

Exposing the recently deceased to ambrosia can cause them to resume life functions, as the fluid attempts to repair whatever harm terminated the decedent. This process is unreliable, as it falls far outside the nanites' intended use. Repairing the psychological trauma caused by death and subsequent reanimation is even further beyond the abilities of microscopic machines designed to repair stress fractures in starships.

As if that wasn't enough, the living dead may even receive some degree of Inspiration, meaning they awaken from death heavily traumatized, socially disconnected, and possessing tremendous powers. Manifestations include the draugar in Scandi, jiangshi in Shang, revenants in Albion, and vrykolakas on the Greek Peninsula, all of which are consistent with Inspired living dead. Hypothetically, their psychological injuries could be healed through medical care, but that has yet to be tested.

CHIMERAS

There's another potential side effect of combing ambrosia with human tissue: chimeras. Under ideal circumstances, nanites had access to all the material necessary for repair within the AEON. Under emergency protocols, ambrosia may combine living (or recently living) material with any tissue it decides is sufficiently similar, such as when it combined a recently sacrificed bull and King Minos' son Asterion (p. XX). It also seemingly upgraded a rebel Shu sorceress by combining her with a fox (p. XX).

Most chimeras remain sapient after their fusion, although often with traumatic results; being synthesized into a single being destroys their very concept of self. Further hampering their psychological recovery, chimeras are monsters in the eyes of many, possibly including their own families and communities. Additionally, their unique physiological features may have long-term health complications.

Larger chimeras have commensurately larger dietary needs and are apex predators, making them threats to local food webs. A pack of satyrs, goat/human chimeras, travel down the Greek Peninsula's western coast, devouring a staggering amount of vegetation. Similarly, the living dead are notoriously ravenous and pose the same danger. At least one group of Albion revenants are roaming the countryside, feasting on wildlife.

SOCIAL DANGERS

The social issues the AEON's crash and presence of ambrosia present are tragically simple; people know that ambrosia exists and has the potential to change their lives for the better. It is two of the most potent drugs in history rolled into one: hope and Inspiration. Ambrosia's desirability and scarcity have already sparked conflicts throughout the world. A non-obvious but significant concern are the Champions offering to retrieve ambrosia for their wealthy patrons, without regard for how those patrons might put it to use. Their patrons may combine their riches and Inspiration to become local warlords, destabilizing their surrounding governments and potentially sparking an Iron Age version of the Aberrant Wars.

Beyond chimeras' increased predation, some Inspired locals lack control of their abilities, posing hazards to their environments as well. A Champion accidentally set the Dadia Forest ablaze. The resulting forest fire ravaged the Greek Peninsula's northeast until an Olympian extinguished it. Similarly devastating, an Oracle wielding biokinetic powers destroyed all life at the source of Scandi's Rickleån river. Both incidents pose long-term dangers to their ecosystems. While the Colleges send representatives to deal with such disasters, and new heroes rise to challenge those reckless — or ruthless — Inspired, the potential exists for a devastating storm or out-of-control blaze to drive the world into the Dark Age much faster than it's already heading.

Wreckage and Salvage

Most of the AEON broke up and burned in the Earth's atmosphere; other large pieces of its hull that survived the initial explosion, the trip back through time, and the extreme heat and friction that comes with hurtling back to Earth shattered when they hit the ground. Gravity tends to win in the end.

Still, some of the ship's parts and onboard devices *did* make it at least partly intact. The most well-known section to those near Mount Olympus was the piece marked AEON that inspired the Society of the Lion, but other interesting items lay scattered throughout the world. Many a curious explorer has laid claim to them and attempted to discover the secrets of their construction and usage. Others go undetected, or have even become a part of their local surroundings, including some of the AEON's Satisfactory Intelligences. The god Hephaestus (p. XX) is one such entity. The SI doesn't remember his tie to the AEON, and has overseen the creation of the Cyclopean Forges.

Reverse-engineering technology from the future with tools from the late Bronze and early Iron Ages is a complicated undertaking, but many Inspired see it as a challenge. Some have been able to coax a device back to some form of functionality, or discovered new uses for a piece of equipment. Others model their own inventions on them, using concepts they've teased out through observation and intuitive leaps. While the ship's computers are severely damaged and output information in different languages than those spoken in the **Aegis** era, scholars may be able to learn to operate them, given proper study. This could potentially spark waves of innovation far ahead of their time — what happens if ancient mathematicians learn the complex calculations on the display screens, or astronomers gain access to the AEON's star charts?

Storyguides have the freedom to place pieces of the AEON's technology in the most perilous areas of the Mediterranean. It also means you can justify exceptionally weird events by blaming them on the crash. "Where did all of these plant monsters come from?" Perhaps the AEON had a hydroponics lab, and some specimens survived. "Why can these assassins run on walls?" Artificial gravity generator. "Where did everyone in Thuria go?" They fled a rampaging security robot.

The Doyen and Other Entities

Though the people of **Aegis'** time aren't aware of it, the galaxy is home to other intelligent species. First contact with any of them in the Trinity Continuum's original timeline is thousands of years away, but Storyguides might wish to introduce them earlier due to characters' actions or the degree of magic vs. science in their games.

As noted in the sidebar on p. XX, remember that human achievements in this era are still exactly that; advances in science, medicine, mathematics, and other technologies come from the people who discovered and built them here on Earth, not interstellar visitors.

The Doyen

The Doyen are an alien species that evolved over four million years ago, in a solar system 7,000 light years from Earth (see **Trinity Continuum: Æon** for details). Their observations of other species — or the evidence of their lost civilizations — told them that most others either destroyed themselves after achieving space travel, or were destroyed by yet other spacefaring entities. To avoid that tragic end, they rushed their evolutionary process, and in so doing, achieved a *sort* of the immortality they'd wished for, but not exactly what they'd desired — a result most Oracles would understand as the price for gambling with fate.

The Doyen normally destroy or subjugate any species who develop quantum powers. Where ambrosia fell, people became Inspired, but it neither blanketed the entire Earth nor threw its quantum energies out of balance. This doesn't mean that the world is safe from Doyen intervention until the 1920s. They're not aware of their future involvement with Earth and humanity, and so far, humans aren't that great a threat: The ancient world's people are just getting the hang of seafaring, never mind slipping the bonds of gravity. However, should the characters' actions draw their attention somehow — setting off their own Hammersmith event

well ahead of the timeline, getting one of the AEON's communications beacons working and broadcasting a signal, or the like — the paranoid Doyen of *this* era would certainly be concerned.

OTHER ENTITIES

At the time of the crash, the human capacity for space travel is still far in the future. However, other planets throughout the Milky Way galaxy are home to intelligent life, and some of those explorers might be active on Earth during the **Aegis** era. While human achievements are still fully the culmination of science and hard work (see "No, Aliens Didn't Build the La Venta Pyramid" on p. XX), people might still interact with otherworldly species without realizing it. Following are examinations of a few Strange Places through that lens.

THE NIGHTMARE CRADLE

Echidna fled from the men of her village to escape horrific treatment. Her attackers cornered her in a cave as a part of the AEON's xenobiology lab ripped through the cavern's wall, killing everyone. Unfortunately for Echidna (and likely the rest of the world), the lab's ambrosia repaired her body and augmented her DNA, granting her a second life and psychic abilities. With her new abilities and workstations brimming with far-future technology, Echidna began producing chimera, calling them her children. Months after her revival, she began creating a handful of particularly concerning creatures: giant slugs with psychic abilities.

These creatures derive from and resemble the Qin, humanity's first documented alien contact and the only peaceful extrasolar civilization (see **Trinity Continuum: Æon** for details). Genuine Qin are natural telepaths, with many wielding other psionic powers and sophisticated biotechnology. Humans of the future rarely see the Qin outside of their biosuits, which mimic the human shape. In their natural form, however, Qin are meter-long slug-like beings with eight prehensile tentacles above their underside tread. Their advances allowed them to terraform their world via microbes, and while they don't share the secrets of their technology, they shared creations with humanity to speed along various projects, including terraforming Mars.

While Echidna's pseudo-Qin pale in comparison, they still possess rudimentary clairsentience and telepathy, enabling them to see and react to monster hunters in advance of any attack. This also makes them unnaturally superior hunters, a fact that has led to massive disruptions in food webs across Europe.

Her pseudo-Qin pose an existential threat to humanity. First, they're clearly not from this planet, and anyone capturing a pseudo-Qin or the corpse of one will have physical evidence of that humanity is not alone in the universe. If that knowledge spreads beyond local belief communities, it might completely change the course of human history.

THALASSA'S CHEST

This domed city beneath the Mediterranean Sea is one of the greatest mysteries of all of the civilizations in **Aegis'** era. Locals refer to the amphibious species of this underwater city as nereids. Nereids are equally adapted to water and land, though they clearly prefer the sea. All nereids departing the Chest display Inspiration-like abilities, though most of these powers originate from their equipment, not the nereids themselves.

In truth, the nereids aren't from Earth at all, but are an alien species on a long-term survey of the planet. Their closely guarded technology is highly advanced, and nereid astronomers watch the skies for signs of the craft that's due any time now to take them home.

WANDERING ARCHIPELAGO

The second strangest feature of the Mediterranean, the Wandering Archipelago is an island chain rarely found in the same place twice. A group of powerful sorceresses loosely banded together for mutual defense could provide one explanation for the islands' mobility; a combination of Oracles working together could create wooden barges and dress them up to be indistinguishable from volcanic islands.

However, the islands' foundations are metal. And not just any metal, but an aluminum alloy that's flexible, has tremendous compression strength, and is buoyant. The metallurgical skill required to create any useful alloy of aluminum should be beyond anyone of this era, let alone one with properties of this nature and on this scale.

Either the islands' sorceresses are the strongest of this era *and* able to alter matter and energy, or something far stranger is happening here. There's no indication that the nereids of Thalassa's Chest or any other alien species are connected to this, but to an observer from the far future, it might seem that anyone controlling the islands' moves must use powers of teleportation to relocate the islands. But the islands are immense; teleporting several million tons is no mean feat. There is a non-zero chance that the Wandering Archipelago is related to the

Aliens or Magic?

While this section provides a fun view into how **Aegis** ties into the rest of the Trinity Continuum universe, the versions of Thalassa's Chest and the Wandering Archipelago presented here go further than the rest of this chapter. It's one thing to say that ambrosia isn't magic, simply technology indistinguishable from magic. It's another thing to say that the mermaids and Circe's island are aliens. While these explanations satisfy the logic of the situations, they may not satisfy the thematic or narrative goals of some Storyguides.

If you're one of these Storyguides, ***How Much Magic?*** on p. XX provides suggestions on how to add more magic to the Mediterranean Sea.

Leviathan-class jump ships of the future — living biotech starships that carry humanity throughout the galaxy.

Pre-Crash Conditions

Though the AEON's crash had far-reaching, strange effects in the places its debris landed, some of the strange occurrences around the globe might not actually be the starship's fault. A handful of humans exhibited Inspired-like abilities dating from before the AEON's sudden arrival, and cultures throughout the world contain records of non-human sapient creatures. These include:

Giants: Broadly speaking, giants are humanoids greater than 10 feet tall. Many giant communities appear genetically distinct, such as Albion's amphibious Fomóiri, Scandi's blue jötnar, and the Greek Peninsula's monocular cyclopes, not to mention Fangfeng, a lone 33-foot-tall giant in service to the Shang. Surprisingly, there's been relatively little violence between the older groups of giants and those who appeared in the wake of their contact with ambrosia, suggesting giants possess superior leadership and/or conflict resolution skills.

Gods: Legends abound regarding gods, though whether they're Inspired humans with extraordinary powers or something else remains unknown. Most families of gods settle in remote, defensible locations. Many limit their contact with the humans who worship them, preferring to use priests or other trusted proxies as intermediaries. As gods are territorial, most of their encounters with newly Inspired Olympians have gone poorly. So far, few Olympians have banded together to take on the old gods, but if they ever organize, a war akin to the legendary Titanomachy is near certain.

Sorceresses: Despite the feminine name, sorceresses of other genders exist. Each exhibits high levels of psionic abilities, with clairsentience, telepathy, and healing powers being the most common. Sorceresses appear to prefer privacy, with most dwelling alone. Some live with a handful of relatives, who might also be sorceresses. While they seem somewhat xenophobic, their solitary natures mean organized conflicts between sorceresses and Oracles are rare and unlikely.

Cryptids: All other extra-normal life. This category includes sapient species, such as Scandi's elfin álfar, Albion's fairies, and the Greek Peninsula's winged harpies. Each of these can be broken down into additional categories containing distinct cultures, such as the fairies' Seelie and Unseelie tribes. Not all cryptids appear sapient: the serpentine Greek basilisk seems to have intelligence equivalent to domesticated dogs. Local folklore usually asserts most cryptids are dangerous, though danger doesn't always imply hostility.

Storyguiding Advice

Many players are familiar with ancient Greece's history and mythology, giving them a leg up when interacting with **Aegis'** mysteries and Storyguide characters. Even if players aren't deliberately trying to apply their knowledge to the game, their characters will almost certainly have more knowledge than they ought to. Helping the setting strike the right blend of familiar tales and strange mysteries, **Aegis'** version of the Iron Age diverges from ours.

You can also lean into the science fiction aspects

of **Aegis** and blend swords and sandals fantasy with spacefaring science fiction. **Aegis** or **Æon**-era characters could work together to scour the Iron Age for resources to survive, or even struggle against rival organizations to keep the timeline undisturbed.

For more on how to play with timelines and genre-bending campaigns, see *Historical Revisionism* on p. XX, and "Ancient Stories, Modern Tales" in Chapter Seven.

WHAT ABOUT A...?

AEON's crash spilled future artifacts across the lands. While this chapter suggests some of the more interesting technologies loose in **Aegis**, the list is incomplete, leaving room for you to add your own ideas. If you have a favorite device from science fiction (or even the present!), you can make sure it winds up here somehow. Just remember to think about the device from the perspective of a local of circa 1,000 BCE. None of them are likely to have seen a computer of any kind, let alone the hypertech of **Æon**.

A Wazukana III Medical Robot might appear as a strange sculpture atop its own wagon. It might take Iron Age Champions some time to realize it can be used to treat injuries and even longer to figure out how to make it do that. (And longer still to learn how to recharge their robot doctor.) But they're exceptional characters by definition and will get there eventually. Of course, if a device has multiple functions, discovering each might take some time. This discovery process might be an extended action or simply the players figuring out what you're describing.

If the allure of sufficiently advanced technology indistinguishable from magic excites you and your players, you can heighten that. Describing items through physical descriptions instead of by their functions leaves the players' minds free to run wild trying to figure out what the sonic drill in their character's hands does. Remember, the technology aboard the AEON came from the far future; even if your players are professional technologists, they will not know what your version of that device looks like. For example, the shipboard computers could look like a flickering ghost, words on a flexible pane of smoked glass, or a metal and stone chalice that responds to queries.

Of course, you shouldn't make it too difficult for the characters to use the AEON's equipment, either; its home era's technology is user-friendly. So long as you try to balance a fantasy-style sense of wonder and respecting your players' intelligence, everyone will have fun.

HISTORICAL REVISIONISM

Between Champions, Oracles, and Olympians, it's inevitable that some facet of the age will diverge from the best-researched hypotheses and archaeological data; this is expected and part of the fun of **Aegis.** But sometimes things get out of hand. A character might overthrow Zeus, an ill-timed Telluric blast may trigger a volcanic eruption or kill Merlin. Any such mishap might shatter the timeline, leaving the historical chasm between **Aegis** and known history irreconcilable. But this is the Age of Heroes — creating an impossible past need not be a catastrophe.

NUDGING HISTORY

For the people of the **Aegis** era, the starfall simply happened — it's part of their history now, whether such an event was recorded in the AEON's original historical logs or not. In addition to sparking inventions decades or even centuries before their historical discoveries, the ripple effect would almost certainly be massive, making the timeline nearly unrecognizable in a relatively short span. While destroying reality itself is an unlikely outcome, the current events will have consequences temporally downstream, and some future organizations may wish to set things back on track.

Some Storyguides and players may prefer that history unfolds similarly to our Earth. Others want to play a game where fixing history is the core mission. After all, the closer an **Aegis** game is to our history and mythology, the easier it is for Storyguides to create scenarios that jibe with their players' understanding of the Iron Age.

FATE

This method assumes that history — on a macroscopic level — is immutable; fate will correct any alterations, one way or the other. Because the AEON's supply of ambrosia is limited, and everyone wants it, it'll run out in a year or two. While ambrosia will still give rise to multitudes of superpowered beings, all will die of old age. In a hundred years, the Inspired will fade into legends and myths.

No matter how much the players' characters meddle, any pivotal events will still happen, just in a weirder way than we think they do:

If a group of Olympians climb to the top of Mount Olympus and depose the Greek gods, the Grecians may regard Zeus' family as the Titans, making the players' characters victors of the Titanomachy. No matter how much the characters protest, the locals will believe what they want.

Even if heroes successfully protect the Shang Dynasty from the Zhou Dynasty's assault, the Zhou will eventually prevail. Through martial might or a strategic marriage, Central China's ownership will change hands.

HARD WORK

This paradigm works in the same way as fate, except that fate doesn't correct the past on its own; it works through the characters. A group that accidentally inspires High Priest Menkheperre to execute the pharaoh may need to salve the priest's ego — or at least delay the pharaoh's death by a few years. If the characters discover time anomalies in some of the Strange Places, or use Oracular powers to cast their consciousness backward, they may attempt to erase the damage by pitting the characters against their past selves to repair history.

If characters accidentally kill Brutus of Troy, they can find a replacement. After all, Brutus' family wasn't the only group of Trojans to land in Albion. And if the characters don't like the Trojans, they can always make room for the fairies to move in and create their own version of Britain — one whose events unfold as they did in our world, but where everyone is a little more fae.

BREAKING HISTORY

Of course, a faster solution to resolve temporal paradoxes is to embrace them. After all, each **Trinity Continuum** era exists in a timeline only *possibly* connected to the others. Creating your own alternate history can be thrilling, albeit somewhat more challenging for the Storyguide. At the beginning of an **Aegis** game, anyone even vaguely familiar with Mediterranean history has a sense of what's going on. Once that anchor's released, each new change compounds upon the next, driving it further into the unknown. Crossing this metaphorical Rubicon may mean there is no Caesar to cross the physical Rubicon.

This isn't a bad thing. Playing fast and loose with history empowers players; they can see their characters making a real impact on events. Even when they make poor choices or you throw them a curveball, they can see the ripples of their actions. However, that sword cuts both ways; the greater impact characters have, the harder it is to ensure that the history of your setting remains coherent.

A NEWER PAST

Running an alternate history game is all about details and consequences. Even if you're playing with history and mythology professors, they don't know what will happen if someone kidnaps the pharaoh or steals the Argo from the Argonauts. They have a good idea, but anyone who reads the news knows that humans are unpredictable, and that goes double for superhumans. So long as events seem plausible in the moment and make a kind of sense in hindsight, it'll feel like it's all part of the same world.

Be sure to note decisions the players' characters make, especially when the players don't realize the gravity of their choice. Between sessions, you can decide if those decisions might snowball into something bigger. If a character becomes famous and regularly visits the same restaurant, that chef could become famous, rumors of an illicit affair may fly, or a rival might burn it to the ground, just to spite the character. Characters helping a Phoenician scholar might find King Abibaal's generosity has dried up. And that's just the local effects; the more powerful the players' characters are, the farther their reach. A group of Olympians can cause enough trouble that you may need to roleplay an entire nation to determine how its people will react.

THE RIGHT PAST FOR YOU

Of course, even when the consequences for characters make perfect sense, they don't always lead to enjoyment. After all, deposing a tyrant and freeing the people he enslaved is exciting, but what happens next? How will the region's agriculture fare? Dictators and slavers are loathsome, but poorly planned revolutions often leave many to starve or be murdered by thugs no longer under anyone's control.

RESOURCES

If you have the time and inclination, learning more about the time and surrounding mythology can be fun and help your worldbuilding. The books ***Historia Brittonum*** and ***Historia Regum Britanniae*** are set in Albion around this time. The classics of ancient Greece, the ***Iliad*** and the ***Odyssey*** take place a little before **Aegis** and are filled with details that can enrich your game. If videos are more your style, ***Extra Credits*** YouTube channel has an entertaining series on the Bronze Age Collapse, which occurs about a century before **Aegis** and has a huge impact on the region.

The characters *could* scramble to handle the humanitarian crises they inadvertently caused, but is that actually the game your players want?

Fighting heroic battles is exciting. Keeping people fed is hard work.

If you or your players realize that their characters' timeline can't provide the right kind of game, you have the power to fix it. Consider this an opportunity for a second Session Zero. The heroes toppled the tyrant, killed the Lernaean hydra, ascended to the throne of Atlantis. Now what? If everyone still loves your timeline, but no one finds the prospect of frantic governance appealing, skip a few years. Talk it over with your players and collaborate on the future of your shared world. Discover what they want out of the game. Once you're armed with that knowledge, you can fill in some details and create new allies, foes, and problems for the characters.

AEGIS, ÆON, AND BEYOND

While **Aegis** is decidedly a mythic fantasy setting, your table might enjoy an alternate way of playing, one where the players' characters are from another **Trinity Continuum** era. Mixing and matching settings in this way injects science fiction into mythology, echoing beloved science fiction franchises such as *Doctor Who, Stargate,* and *Star Trek*. Such a game requires answers to two important questions: How did the Inspired get there? Why did they go there?

HOW TO BREAK TIME

Aegis assumes characters are from the ancient world, but that need not be true. Inspired from any era can find their way here:

All Eras: Time travel technology is a funny thing; it can only be created in the future, but it can be stolen at any point in history.

Aether: A character from this era may have spun herself a Gate to study the Bronze Age Collapse, or an unwinding event might have worked a little *too* well, sending a team far into the past.

Adventure!: While it's improbable that Talents from the 1930s would get scooped up by the AEON and climb inside as it whizzes by, the improbable is Daredevils' specialty.

Core & Assassins: Though Inspired of our age might have gotten aboard the AEON the same way as Adventure!'s Talents, it's more likely that they got their hands on a time travel device, perhaps something the National Office of Emergency Research has confiscated, or an item the Society of Leonidas has squirreled away.

Aberrant: If the AEON paused even briefly in **Aberrant**'s 21st Century, novas might have flown up to help, only to be caught in its time bubble. Or maybe N-Day went horribly wrong and threw a group of novas into the time stream, only to get swept up by the AEON's temporal wake.

Æon: Characters might be another ship's psion crew, stowaways, aberrant saboteurs, or even LunaCorp workers in the wrong place. The AEON's catastrophic explosion is still in their distant future, but alarm bells ring throughout the psi orders, and the ensuing investigation pulls the characters along for the terrifying ride.

No Era: Characters working for the heretofore unknown Æon Continuum have a duty to protect the timelines, and the AEON's disaster is a massive threat to said timelines. Psions or novas from a timeless void could step through a temporal transportal to repair the damage before it can spread too far. Alternatively, the Æon Continuum might recruit Inspired of any era to save the timelines.

WHY TO BREAK TIME

When you think about it, there are a *lot* of factions within the Continuum who might end up here, whether because they tried to save the AEON, see an opportunity to exploit history, or simply have rotten luck. It's less a question of *how* other Inspired got here and more a question of *who* would be the most fun here?

Æon Society: Characters from any incarnation of the Æon Society has an obvious reason to help — it's their duty to protect the Earth from all threats, and **Aegis** has no shortage of those.

Branch 9: The existence of any time travel in ancient Greece poses a grave security risk to the world, one that 9 has a duty to investigate and eliminate. Even if they learn they're in over their heads and can't fight the temporal intruders head-on, they can still slip through the shadows, repairing the timeline.

Chitra Bhanu: Quantakinetics traveling to the past can rest, knowing that they're beyond the reach of Doyen and their former human allies. While they may wish to return to their time to fight, for now,

they can simply use their powers without a Legion kill team coming for them.

Global Cartography Initiative: GCI seeks knowledge and, when it comes to historical research, there is no substitute for direct observation. And if they find opportunities to repair some damage, so much the better. After all, who better to set the past right than a group of scholars?

Order of the Stars: Iron Age Egypt is a golden opportunity to empower North Africa and create a future where no one would dare colonize Africa. Instead of a plundered continent, they could have one as rich as any other — or even richer.

Project Utopia: Drawn to the past to save the AEON and the timeline, Project Utopia's need to be here is even stronger if the Teragen are here, threatening to change the past. Though clashes between novas always have the potential for collateral damage, there are no skyscrapers in Aegis; Team Tomorrow need not hold back anymore.

Society of Leonidas: King Leonidas won't be born for another 500 years, but the Society's Assassins seek big fish, and what bigger fish are there than gods? Putting a spear through Zeus' chest might be nearly impossible, but it'll further the mystery cult's goals by preventing certain relics from having the chance to fall into the wrong hands. Besides, some of them have questions about the similarly named "Society of the Lion."

Teragen: Inspired by the words of Divis Mal himself, Teragen can create a new future where novas needn't fear being chased from the Earth, one where novas reign supreme. The gods do it. Why shouldn't the novas?

Regardless of factional goals, time travelers in **Aegis** have many opportunities. Obviously, they can recover pieces of the AEON, patch up history, and go home, but they can also explore the world, immerse themselves in the cultural and problems of a people, and become folk heroes.

TRINITY CONTINUUM AEGIS

Name: _____
Player: _____
Concept: _____
Additional Paths: _____

Origin Path: _____ ○○○○○
Role Path: _____ ○○○○○
College Path: _____ ○○○○○
Inspired Type: _____

Moment of Inspiration _____

SKILLS

Aim:	○○○○○	Integrity:	○○○○○
Athletics:	○○○○○	Larceny:	○○○○○
Close Combat:	○○○○○	Medicine:	○○○○○
Command:	○○○○○	Persuasion:	○○○○○
Culture:	○○○○○	Pilot:	○○○○○
Empathy:	○○○○○	Science:	○○○○○
Enigmas:	○○○○○	Survival:	○○○○○
Humanities:	○○○○○	Technology:	○○○○○

ATTRIBUTES

☐ Force	Intellect	●○○○○○	Might	●○○○○○	Presence	●○○○○○
☐ Finesse	Cunning	●○○○○○	Dexterity	●○○○○○	Manipulation	●○○○○○
☐ Resilience	Resolve	●○○○○○	Stamina	●○○○○○	Composure	●○○○○○

FACETS

Destructive _____ ○○○○○
Intuitive _____ ○○○○○
Reflective _____ ○○○○○

INJURY CONDITIONS

☐ Bruised _____ +1
☐ Bruised _____ +1
☐ _____
☐ _____
☐ Injured _____ +2
☐ Injured _____ +2
☐ Maimed _____ +4
Taken Out

INSPIRATION

○○○○○○○○○○
☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Defense = Appropriate Resilience Attribute
Armor: _____
Experiences: _____

EDGES

SPECIALTIES/SKILL TRICKS

GIFTS

PATH CONTACTS

ASPIRATIONS

GEAR

Gear	EN

ARMOR

Armor	Base	Hard	Soft

WEAPONS

Weapon	EN	Range	Damage	Type	Tags

A Beacon of Hope in a Dark Age

Trinity Continuum: Aegis is a game of adventure and exploration set in Greece's Iron Age. Ten years ago, streaks of fire lit up the skies, setting alight the night. The largest of these crashed into Mount Olympus, and pools of glowing golden liquid appeared in their path. Those who came into contact with the substance were forever changed, and now they use their incredible powers to fight monsters, protect their communities, and explore the world.

The Trinity Continuum Corebook is required to play this game.

This book includes:

- Rules for creating Champions, Oracles, and Olympians — Aegis' superpowered heroes — and an overview of the Colleges they form.
- New Gifts tailored to the new character types.
- New rules for Dramatic Editing and Super Science, and new antagonists for your characters to face.
- Storyguiding advice for running a game in the world of Aegis.

Trinity™ Continuum

Onyx Path Publishing
Storypath System